VIEW FROM WRIGHT HOMESTEAD

Reminiscences of Plymouth

Luzerne County, Penna.

A Pen Picture of the Old Landmarks of the Town; the Names of Old Residents; the Manners, Customs and Descriptive Scenes, and Incidents of Its Early History.

By

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PREFACE

SOME time ago an elderly gentleman of near my own age and a stranger in the town, called upon me in search of information regarding some of the old landmarks of Plymouth which he remembered, but had not seen since his young boyhood. I have also heard of other old people, who, in response to that inherent longing, or natural instinct which impels a return to the paternal nest, having visited the town to view the scenes of their youth, and revive the precious memories of their happy childhood.

There are doubtless many others who are imbued with the same natural human desire; and in a measure to gratify such, it was suggested to me, that perhaps I, as one of the few remaining relics of a past age was properly qualified and therefore in duty bound, so far as possible, to rescue from oblivion and perpetuate the old memories, by placing on record enduring evidence of bygone scenes and incidents. In the contemplation of that task, in the efforts in tracing up obliterated, or fast disappearing landmarks, I have been somewhat surprised to discover but comparatively few persons remaining here whose knowledge regarding the past was in that respect much, if any better or more reliable than my own.

That circumstance, while strangely enough arousing a suspicion in my mind that I too must be getting old and fossilized, also tended to add force to the suggestion that perhaps a duty was devolving upon me to undertake a task which in the course of nature, "if it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly."

The describing and recounting of old scenes and incidents as they have been recalled by my researches has been to me a labor of love, and I submit the results of my efforts in endeavoring to comply with the injunction, "rejoice and do good," in the hope that by reviving memories of long forgotten scenes may assist perhaps some despondent natives to live again in memory the happy days of their youth.

S. L. French.

Plymouth, Pa.,
December 15th, 1914.

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Chapter I.

Early History—Connecticut Charter—Shawnee Indians—Town Name—Erection of the Borough—Petitioners for—First Officials—Boundaries of—Elections—Cliques and Fights

IN the Historical Sketches of Plymouth by the Honorable Hendrick B. Wright, to whose history I acknowledge indebtedness for much of the historical data relating to the earlier history of the town which I shall have occasion to refer to in the following pages, that author gives the date of "birth of Plymouth," as December 28th, 1768.

It was one of the noted seventeen townships embraced within the territory vested in the "Susquehanna Company," by charter granted by King Charles II. of England, in 1662, and known as the "Connecticut Charter," which covered a tract of land extending between two parallel lines of latitude some fifty miles north and south, and from east to west, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. As King Charles, in his generosity nineteen years later, to-wit: March 4, 1681, granted precisely the same tract or parcel of land to William Penn and his associates, known as the "Proprietary Government of Pennsylvania," this slight lapse of memory, or lack of knowledge of geography on the part of George, was subsequently the cause of some very serious misunderstandings, and differences of opinion in the minds of the early settlers, to say nothing about the rights and claims of the Shawnee Tribe of Indians, who were the original landlords and proprietors of the real estate in dispute. But, as these reminiscences concern only the scenes and occurrences transpiring within the last hundred years, it is not my purpose to mix into that quarrel, nor discuss the subject, pro and con, of the exercise therein, of the right of eminent domain, which in

plain vernacular, means the acquisition, under color of law, of valuable possessions by brute force; further than to intimate that the above-mentioned clerical or geographical error created a very unpleasant muss which lasted many years, but is now barred out from controversy by the statute of limitations.

The town of Plymouth is often in derision, disdainfully called "Black Shawnee," when referred to by some well-to-do people, whose non-aristocratic ancestors in all probability may have accumulated the wealth which they enjoy by selling rum over the counter at three cents a drink, or perhaps, whose barefooted grandmothers drove cows to pasture on the mountain sides or on Shawnee Flats.

The name "Shawnee" ought to have been retained, as being more original and appropriate, and much more preferable to the Puritan one of "Plymouth," and, in commemoration of the original aborigines, whose belligerent characteristics were doubtless inherited by their later successors, and in a measure, is being perpetuated in the well-known slogan of "Shawnee against the World!"

The present Borough of Plymouth was erected by decree of Honorable John N. Conyngham, President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County, on the 23rd day of April, A. D., 1866, upon the recommendation of the Grand Jury, upon petition therefor of the following named residents, to-wit:

John B. Smith
Peter Shupp
Josiah M. Eno
A. R. Matthews
Geo. P. Richards
Edward Griffith
A. F. Shupp
James McAlarney
H. Gaylord
Draper Smith
Daniel Gardiner
William Jenkins
S. M. Davenport
Lewis Boughton
John J. Shonk
J. P. Davenport

Eli Bittenbender
David McDonald
C. A. Kuschke
Andrew F. Levi
Querin Krothe
David Madden
John Dodson
Darius Gardiner
John Cobley
W. L. Lance, Jr.
J. E. Smith
R. N. Smith
John Dennis
David Levi
W. W. Lance
Wm. W. Dietrick
James Hutchinson
George Brown
Oliver Davenport
Samuel French
A. Gabriel
Theodore Renshaw
Edward G. Jones
J. L. Nesbitt
J. W. Weston
J. H. Waters
John E. Halleck
E. R. Wolfe
F. E. Spry
C. F. Derby
Anthony Duffy
D. Brown
A. G. Rickard
T. P. Macfarlane
W. L. Lance
Lewis Gorham
John Jessop
A. S. Davenport
A. Hutchinson
Brice S. Blair
John S. Geddis
C. H. Wilson, M.D.

The first borough election under that decree was held in the "Old Academy," under the auspices of Oliver Davenport as judge, and John J. Shonk and Ira Davenport as inspectors, on the second Tuesday of the following May, when Elijah C. Wadhams was elected Burgess.

The boundaries of the borough embraced approximately the territory extending from the line of No. 11 Coal Breaker property of the L. & W. B. Coal Company on the east, to the old Mud Tunnel Road—probably a mile and a half distant—on the west; and from the river on the south up to a little beyond a line parallel with Back Street, now known as Shawnee Avenue, or from near the river, excluding farm lands, to near the foot of the mountain. The borough was divided into two wards, the East and the West, the dividing line being Academy Street, and the borough elections were held in the Old Academy where the township elections had previously been held.

These township or general elections in the days of my boyhood were always looked upon as gala days. On those occasions the pent up enthusiasm of the patriots would make itself manifest, and in consequence there would be more or less excitement the entire day. During the preliminary campaigns the ardor of the voters would be frequently aroused and kept at proper temperature by means of "flag-pole raisings," on which occasions speeches by prominent orators were the dominant features. Hickory poles, in reference to "Old Hickory"—General Jackson—would symbolize the loco-foco or Democratic party, and pine, that of the whigs or Republican, and which were also called "liberty poles." On the tops of these poles there would usually be retained the natural branches and foliage that there might be no mistake made as to their political identity.

The voters on election days would assemble from the Kingston line on the east, to West Nanticoke on the west, and almost invariably, when the Nanticoke contingent had arrived upon the ground in the afternoon, there would start a fight, and torn clothes and bloody heads would be conspicuously in evidence. These patriotic ebullitions, however, must not be wholly credited to the Nanticoke boys, for since the earliest times there seems to have been a jealous clique existing between the "uptown" and "downtown" sections of the community; the dividing line between the factions being the old Academy; and, like their aboriginal predecessors, when the two factions happened to meet in numbers, there was likely to be a scrimmage. At one of these general elections I recall, a new element from the neighborhood of Welsh Hill, or Poke Hollow, was injected, which united the factions, and there resulted a general battle in which clubs and stones were very much in evidence. The in-

vaders, however, were ignominiously driven from the field without any serious damage resulting. Another instance about the time of the outbreak of the rebellion, when a clash occurred between a copper-head preacher named Headly and one of the prominent citizens for a time threatened more serious results.

Chapter II.

Lower End of Town—The Old Hodge House—The Wright Homestead—Silk Industry—Mrs. Ellen Wright—Landscape Scenery—Samuel Ransom—John Kreidler—Thos. Mast—Isaac Kreidler—Home Sweet Home—Query for Naturalists—Old Scenes—Hodge Cemetery.

IN recounting my recollections and impressions of the scenes, old landmarks and old residents of Plymouth, I will commence at the lower, or west end of the borough; that locality being the place of my birth and where the larger part of my boyhood days were spent; and thence, following the main or principal thoroughfare eastward, will endeavor to picture the scenes in regular order as I recall them upwards of sixty years ago:

Beginning at a point on the lower side of the road nearby the bridge which crosses the excavation made for the old Jersey plane, there stood an old black house two stories high which, I think, was known as the "Old Hodge House," and where lived in early days, if I am not mistaken, a man named Skadden, who was a cabinet-maker. I have in my possession an old writing desk and bookcase more than a hundred years old which belonged to my grandfather; it is made of cherry wood, which grew on Shawnee Flats, and which, I believe, was made by Mr. Skadden, and still attests the superiority of his

workmanship. This house was later occupied by a family named Bangs, and later still by Carpenter Rinus, an old citizen, and at the time of the building of the L. & B. R.R., Anthony Duffy, a section boss, lived there. Mr. Duffy, who was quite an original, afterwards became one of Plymouth's foremost and enterprising citizens. He built Duffy's Hall, now occupied as a saloon and public hall by F. L. Donn. He used to tell of an opportunity he once had of buying a town site in Ireland for a pair of boots, and the only reason the purchase was not made was because he didn't have the boots.

A little further down and on the opposite side of the road, in a little one and a half story building there lived an old colored man with a white wife, who was known as Black Anthony. This house was later occupied by Thomas Worman. Coming up the road, on the upper side, near the Mud Tunnel Road, stood the large Andrus barn, so named for a former occupant of a red house a few rods further up. Directly in front of this house and on the lower side of the road, stood a large walnut tree, and near it was a road leading down to my step grandfather's barn, behind which there usually stood several large stacks of hay and grain. Almost precisely on this spot now stands the fan house and Wright slope of the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Company.

Coming up on the upper side of the main road was the dwelling house of my step-grandfather, Joseph Wright, the father of Hendrick B., Caleb E. and Harrison Wright. This house is yet standing, though in a dilapidated condition. On the westerly side of this house there used to be a stream of clear water and by the side of the road stood a public watering trough. Here was also a beautiful grove of mulberry trees covering probably two or three acres of ground, and there, when a boy,

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I used to spread salt in long troughs for the benefit of a flock of sheep, and at certain seasons of the year my task was to gather mulberry leaves to feed my grandmother's silk worms, which she raised in the front room of her house, where they were spread out on long tables built for the purpose. They grew to be large green, repulsive looking things, about the size of a man's finger, and when fully engaged in devouring the leaves, their mastication exertions were quite noisy. I don't just remember the process, but after a short period these nasty looking varments would roll, or transform themselves into the most beautiful golden cocoons, which my grandmother would somehow or other manipulate into silk thread, which was later transformed into stockings or other articles of wearing apparel. She also had a weaver's loom in another building in the rear of the house, where, like others of her neighbors, she wove wool and flaxen cloths. In the yard beside the garden fence there stood a tall hop pole—a familiar sight at nearly all the dwellings—where a profusion of hops were grown for use in making yeast to raise bread and for the manufacture of hop poultices, but these articles are now numbered among the lost arts and about the only useful purpose this valuable vegetable promoter of health and comfort now serves in this enlightened age is in the manufacture of beer, with which to raise—well, domestic infelicity.

My grandmother, who died in the ninety-seventh year of her age, was in very many respects a most remarkable woman. She was a great reader, well versed in all the current events of the day, and I have reason to believe, she thoroughly understood the almanac and knew the Bible almost by heart, from Genesis to Revalations, including the Apochrypha. I lived with her when

quite a young man, and upon returning from church on Sundays, where I sometimes went, if I could manage to remember but three or four words of the text, she could most always locate, if not repeat it. One night I was out pretty late—I was old enough to attend "apple cuts"—and I came into the house on tip-toe, and as I imagined, had made a safe retreat. The next morning she said to me, "Livingston, what time did you come in last night?" "Oh," I replied, "I guess it must have been about 10 o'clock." "Well!" she said, "the moon didn't rise last night until after 1 o'clock, and it was some time after that before you came in."

There was no immediate occasion for any further argument, and I had urgent business out in the yard.

In front of this house was a beautiful view of broad and fertile fields and meadows, where many a day I have worked at hoeing corn or making hay, but this is now all obscured and obliterated; the greater portion of the landscape being covered over with huge piles of culm and debris from the old Washington coal breaker and the Wright slope, and its former beauty exists only in memory.

A few rods on further up the road was the residence of Samuel Ransom—yet standing. This house was originally built for use as a hotel, but was not so used within my remembrance. On the lower side of the road and in front of the house stood his barn, and just above the house was the dairy house which was supplied with water from a small stream coming from a spring a little way above. Just below this and near the road was the hennery, and on the upper side of the road was a public watering trough. These last named premises later gave place to the residence and surroundings of William L. Lance.

Samuel Ransom had several children, only three of whom I recall as living with him. They were Courtright and Jamison, both near my own age, and a younger daughter, Margretta. There was also a daughter, Hannah, who died. They subsequently removed to the neighborhood of Muncy, on the west branch of the Susquehanna.

Coming a little farther up and on the same side of the road, I have a faint recollection of there having stood a blacksmith's shop conducted by a colored man known as "Black John," and next above, there stands yet, a one and a half story red house where lived in my earliest recollection, Elias Petty, who drove team for my father. Mrs. Katy Gabriel also at one time lived there. Later, this building was converted into and used as a store by my father. It is now used as a tenement house. On the opposite side of the road was the wheelwright shop and residence of John Kreidler, and the blacksmith shop and residence of Thomas Mast.

Almost in front of Kreidler's shop, and quite in the roadway, there stood a very large walnut tree. This wheelwright shop and residence was afterwards occupied by Isaac Kreidler, who used to make for us boys hand sleds with oak runners, for which he charged, first a shilling (12½ cents), then 15 cents each, which was a fabulous sum of money; later he declared he could not afford to make any more for less than 25 cents, which was an utterly prohibitory price, and that industry ceased. In emergent cases, he would also occasionally make coffins. These were made with double folding lids and were invariably stained red.

The residence of Mr. Mast, which is yet standing, was afterwards occupied by the family of Robert Hunter, who drove the Chauncey tunnel, the coal mine now

operated by the George F. Lee Coal Company. Mr. Hunter had a large family; two of his sons, Robert and James, served in the army during the war of the rebellion, and a daughter, Ellen, married Philip Keller, and was the mother of Joseph H. Schwartz's first wife. Mr. Mast removed to the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

John Kreidler had two children, George and Sabina. The family removed to Illinois, and George died from the effects of wounds received in the battle of Pittsburgh Landing.

Next in order comes the most interesting place to me of all, the old paternal homestead. On the upper side of the road there stands today the main part of the old stone house which was probably built by a man named Coleman, who was of the early large property owners in Plymouth, or possibly, by James Hodge, who had formerly lived in it; and, although it is probably more than a hundred years old, is apparently in as good condition now as ever. There, on the 28th day of September, 1839, I first saw the light of day, and there, barring the time I spent away at school or in the army, I spent the most of, and the happiest days of my early life. How often I recall, and realize the truth of the words of my revered old maiden aunt, who, when I would be fretting and worrying over some boyish troubles, would say: "Poor child, he is living the happiest days of his life and don't know it."

The front and side of the house was almost entirely covered over with climbing ivy, and the spacious yard was filled with large black cherry and other trees and shrubbery, affording abundant and delightful shade in hot weather, and likewise, a safe retreat for innumerable birds of varied kinds and plumage, in which to hold

their daily concerts. But these beautiful feathered musicians of nature, like the original aborigines, have entirely disappeared before the onward sweep of civilization; most of their species, if not now become extinct, are but reminiscences of natural history, and the sweet melody of birds has given place to yelping mongrel dogs —and such is civilization.

This diversion in the interests of the feathered tribe recalls an incident which perhaps will be of interest to naturalists. One day as I was approaching the house through the front yard, my attention was attracted to the peculiar antics of a small bird, flitting to and fro among the vines with drooping wings and apparently in distress. I walked towards it and came very near putting my hand on a big black snake which was coiled around the trunk of the vine some four or five feet above the ground. I stepped back and for a few moments watched the bird, which, with plaintive cry would every time come closer and closer, apparently fearing to approach, yet powerless to resist. I shot the snake and threw it out on the grass, and for several hours after that bird would hop around and near it, acting precisely as it did in the vines, all the time making the same doleful cry. Was not that bird charmed by the snake? But to resume again the thread of my story; there, at the side of the house near the kitchen door and under the shade of a huge walnut tree, stood the old wooden pump with its long iron handle—"How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood." On that iron handle I once on a banter, "stuck" my tongue on a frosty morning; it stuck all right to my great sorrow.

On the easterly side and a few yards distant ran the Ransom Creek, which in my earliest recollections was a stream of clear water. There I used to play with

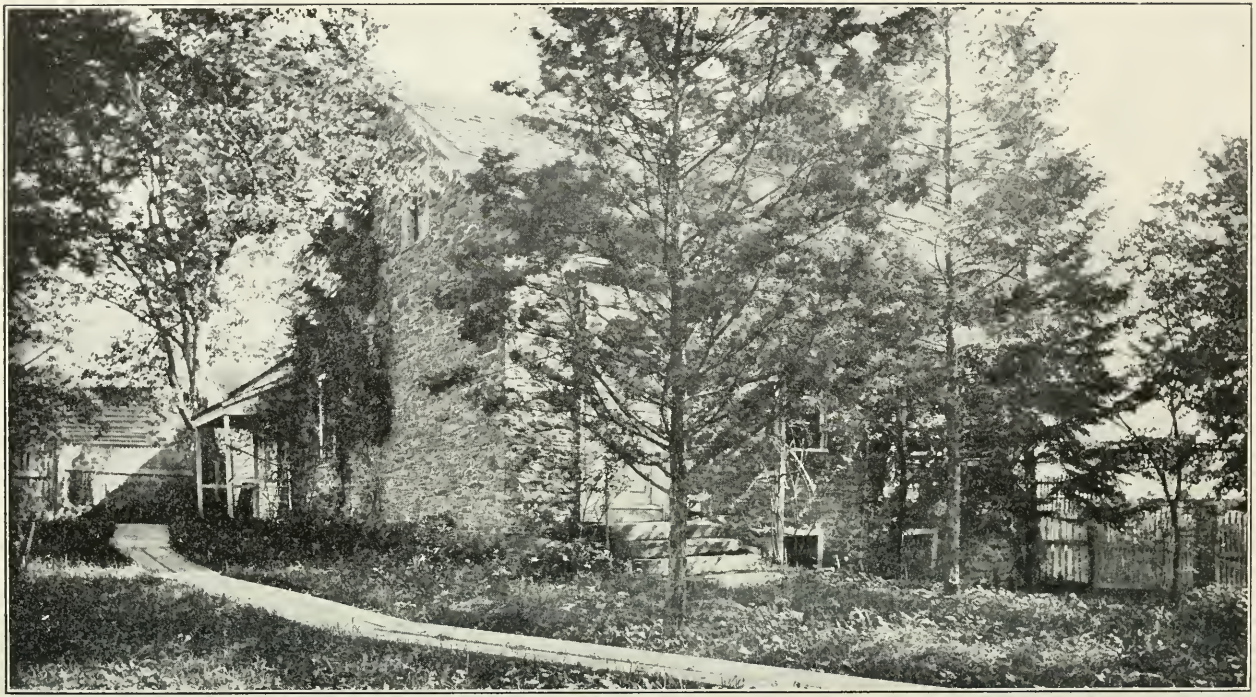
sail boats and water wheels, and there in early spring my father's sheep were brought to be washed and sheared. Among that flock of sheep I have reason to remember, was the "old ram," so well known to many men and boys whose great delight was to tease him in the pasture lot above the barn, and who thus became so ferocious that my father hung on his horns, covering his face and giving him a very grotesque appearance, a large piece of sole leather with small eyeholes cut in it, as a means of protective warning to strangers who might happen to come within his range.

On the north side of the house were the barns and sheds, to the right of which there was formerly an apple orchard, and a little farther up where tenement houses now stand was a beautiful grove of oak trees, where Sunday School picnics were sometimes held.

From the barnyard, a narrow lane, lined with mulberry trees led up the hill into an apple orchard, near the east side of which, later, ran the old Washington plane; and in the lower corner of this orchard, under the shade of a large wild cherry tree, was located a small private burying ground of the Hodge family, for James Hodge had formerly lived in the homestead. This burial place filled with briar bushes and weeds, was surrounded by a rather dilapidated stone wall, and within it was a large tomb or vault, which in turn was surrounded with a wooden fence, the corner posts of which were surmounted with large wooden urns. This particular tomb always impressed me, when a boy, with a feeling of awe, and close beside it was another grave, on the head-stone of which I recall the horrifying inscription:

"Remember, friend, as you pass by,
As you are now, so once was I."

This graveyard is now entirely obliterated, not a



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vestige of it remains; the dead, like the old, are in the way, and must make room for progress; and thus, like

> "Imperial Caeser, dead and turned to clay,
> May stop a hole to keep the wind away."

Returning again to the homestead, on the westerly side and but a few feet distant, was a frame building built originally for a carriage house. This my father fitted up as a private school room for us children, under the tutelage of my elder sister. There being ample room, and no detriment to proper instruction thereby, a few of the neighbors' children were admitted as pupils. Of these, I recall the names of Mary and Ellen Garrahan, Esther and Isabel Bulkley, Sam McNulty, Wilson Wright and Hannah Miller, who worked for my grandmother. This school was successfully continued for several years, and after its abandonment the building was converted into an office and private club room, where, under the leadership of W. Z. Hatcher, a near neighbor, Will and De Haven Lance, my brother and myself used to meet most every evening and practice as a string band. We had a flute, two or three violins, and a violincello, and made pretty good music. Those, indeed, were happy days.

On the opposite side of the road from the house was a one-story schoolhouse, but this I will describe in another chapter.

In the preceding descriptions, as in those to follow, I have endeavored to picture the old town as I remember it many years ago. The intervening spaces between the buildings mentioned, have, in many instances, since been solidly built up.

Chapter III.

Col. Ransom's Homestead—His Capture by Indians—Ira Ransom—The "Swing Gate"—School Boy's Pranks—Old Sucker Hole — Round Stakes — Thos. Davenport's House — Ira Davenport—His Store—Post Office—Mails and Stage Coach —John and Elijah Davenport—Cider Press—John B. Smith's House—Jessop's Hotel—Chas. Water's Shoe Shop—Samuel Davenport's Store—Chauncey Reynolds' House—Albert Gabriel—C. E. Young—Turner's Tannery—"Aunt" Fanny Turner—Turner's Store—Wadham's Store—The M. E. Church—Old Kingston Church.

CROSSING Ransom's Creek to the eastward, and near its grass covered bank, under the shade of sturdy old oaks, stood the large red dwelling house of that old revolutionary veteran, "Col." George P. Ransom, and of which only the depression in the ground to mark the place which was once the cellar is now in evidence. This house faced broadside to the roadway with a wide doorway in the center, in the entrance of which hung one or two rifles with their necessary accoutrements of powder horns and leather pouches, together with some relics of the hunter's skill in the form of buck's horns. To the rear, and a little to one side under a large oak, was a small stone dairy or milk house supplied with a running stream of clear cold water which served the purpose of a refrigerator. Further up the creek was a long, one and a half story double dwelling house, occupied at one time by Edward (Neddy) Crowell, and a blacksmith named Fletcher. It was also, I think, known as the "Black John House." In front, at one side of the Ransom house, and near the roadside, there was an open wagonshed where the old Colonel's pony coach was kept. On the opposite side of the road stood the barn with a long open cow shed at the side.

My earliest recollection of Colonel Ransom was when he walked with two canes, the possession of which

I have been told, I would cry for. He would drive out with a pair of ponies hitched to an open-top conveyance of the buckboard style, but in his later years he was confined during the day to a roller chair under the charge of Charles (Mutt) Barber, who would attend to his wants in preparing his tobacco—of which he was an inveterate user—in the form of convenient sized quids, and seeing that the whiskey bottle was kept filled. I remember that one evening, when I was a small boy, my aunt took me over to call on him for the purpose of hearing him relate his adventures with the Indians; of how he, and some of his comrades, while visiting some girl friends were captured in a house which stood on the upper side of the road near the spot where Whitman's shoe store now stands; of their journey to Canada, their subsequent escape therefrom, and the difficulties and privations they underwent while travelling through the forests in making their way homeward. These tales were of thrilling interest to me, and were only marred by his extreme reticence in the telling, and his very vigorous expectoration efforts as he sat in his arm-chair in front of the huge open fire-place. He died in 1850, aged about 90 years. I was present at his burial, which took place with military honors in the old Shupp burying ground. His son, Ira, a brave veteran of the late war of the rebellion, and now upwards of 92 years of age, is still living in good health on his farm in Jackson township; a remarkable and probably unparalleled instance in the county, if not in the State, of a living, real "son of the Revolution."

Coming on further up the street on the same side, on a knoll at the intersection of Coal and Main Streets, and on the spot now occupied by the store building of the late Edwin Davenport, stood the little one-story frame

schoolhouse which was afterwards removed further down the street. Directly in front of the schoolhouse was the "swinggate," which closed the flat road during the growing and harvest season from the depredations of vagrant cattle and swine. This road led straight down to "Garrison Hill," where was always a thrifty growth of willows, and to which place the boys of the school would be sent by the teacher to get his supply of chastisement rods. Sometimes these would be so ingeniously twisted, or perforated before delivery, as to make their stinging qualities less painful. Continuing straight down to the river was the old "sucker hole," where, in early spring, was always to be found a dozen or more enthusiastic fishermen with poles and lines fishing for suckers.

There being considerable space in the roadway between the schoolhouse and the swing gate that was a favorite spot on which men and boys would meet to play "round stakes," which was the original baseball game. In these contests, Eb. and Dow Rinus, both wiry athletes, were always the star players, and with one of them at the bat and the other as pitcher, there was always some lively action. Dow, by the way, was a very expert fiddler; he played entirely by air, and his services were always in great demand at the country dances. On the lefthand side of the entrance to the flat road was the barn and sheds of Oliver Davenport, with the usual complement of grain and hay stacks surrounding.

On the hill past the schoolhouse next came the old house with its high stone steps in front, the former residence, I believe, of Thomas Davenport. My first recollection of this building was when, as a small boy, I attended the funeral there of some young man, which was conducted under the auspices of the Odd Fellows. The

new and splendid brick silk factory of the Atwood's now occupies the site of this building. A little further on, is the brick dwelling house of the late Ira Davenport. I believe this, and the one occupied by the late R. N. Smith a little farther up, were the first brick dwellings to be erected in Plymouth, unless possibly the one where Samuel Davenport lived. The next one, I think, was the hotel built by John Nesbitt on Elm Hill, and now occupied by George B. Shonk, and the first brick store to be erected in town was that of E. C. Wadhams. Directly in front of Ira Davenport's house was the old Davenport barn and sheds, and on the same side and farther east, still stands his store established in 1845. The space between this and the Flat road and extending down that road some distance, is now almost solidly built up with frame houses, conspicuous by the generous number of beer saloons therein.

Davenport's store in my boyhood days was one of the prominent places "downtown." It was Democratic headquarters, and there in the evening would assemble the patriots of the neighborhood who would line up on the counters, spit tobacco juice, swap stories and discuss politics and town scandal generally. It was, I think, during the administration of President Pierce that the post office was removed here from the store of Draper Smith in the upper end of town. Postage on letters in those days was five cents prepaid, or ten cents on delivery. Letters were so folded as to form their own envelope and were sealed with wax or a wafer, and when forwarded by the postmaster, they were wrapped up in paper in bundles according to destination, and so labelled. Ira's method of registering a letter, which was a rare occurrence, was simply to mark on it "Registered," and the act was performed. The mail was transported by

stage coach. At each post office it was sorted and changed, that is, the mail sack was emptied and all mail for that particular office was taken out and replaced by that which was to be forwarded.

The stage coach from down river points usually came up in the early evening at intervals of two or three days, and on summer evenings, occasionally one of our diversions would be to hang on the "boot" behind and ride up, sometimes as far as Elm Hill, which was a tremendous distance. The distance from the bridge over Ransom's Creek to the one over Brown's Creek was considered exactly one mile.

Ira Davenport was one of the most prominent and influential men of the town; strictly honest and open hearted; he enjoyed a good joke and was not averse to making a little fun. He took a very active interest in all public affairs and for many years held several positions of public trust—and no profit. He was careful, conservative, and conscientious in all his acts, and not being crooked himself, he would not permit crookedness in others if he could prevent it. He was a safe man in office for the people, and it would be a God-send, if today his example in that respect would be followed by many others.

Continuing our travels, the next house in order of procession was the residence of John Davenport, the father of Ira and Elijah. It was a two-story frame building with a wide porch in the rear, and in the yard on the west side was a water trough supplied with running water from a spring which also supplied another public trough at the roadside, and in the rear on one side was a small building equipped with a weaving loom, and on the other side and near the porch was the washhouse. On the east side was the barn, and beyond that,

and nearby the house of John B. Smith was the old cider press which was made use of every fall by many of the residents.

The old Davenport homestead was subsequently replaced by a more modern one and occupied by Elijah Davenport during his lifetime. It is now occupied by the family of Joseph Worthington, his son-in-law. The next house is the Smith house, before mentioned, and a little beyond, about where Blair Street is located, stood an old frame house broadside to the road, with a stoop or porch extending the whole length of the building, and which I believe was the former homestead of Daniel Davenport. My most distinct recollection of this building was when it was occupied by Mr. Renshaw, the father of Theodore.

Almost directly in front of this building on the lower side of the road was an open and shallow well, and close by, but further up, was a large barn, and on the site of this, or perhaps a little above, was later built the hotel which for a number of years was kept by John Jessop and his wife. The Jessops moved here from down the river, from about opposite Retreat, where for a long time they had kept a hotel, and which, like that of "Aunt" Lizzie Tuttle's at West Nanticoke, were noted hostelries for travellers passing up and down the river. On the same side, and a little further up, there used to stand a small one-story building used as a shoemaker's shop and conducted by Charles Waters. Near this site was later built the wagonmaker's shop of J. B. Blakeslee, and just above was a blacksmith's shop.

Nearly all this space, where frogs and burdocks used to thrive, down to Ira Davenport's store, is now about solidly built up with frame buildings, in which beer saloons are much in evidence, and it is very difficult to locate the place of old landmarks.

On the upper corner of Davenport and Main Streets there was formerly a frame store building with a wide doorway built on the corner of the building, and was occupied by Samuel Davenport, the father of Abijah, and was established in 1834. This building burned down when I was quite a small boy, and another similar one was erected on the opposite corner, which was kept, first, by Samuel Davenport and John B. Smith, then by John B. Smith, and later, by Abijah Davenport.

Coming on further up was the stately looking mansion of Chauncey Reynolds, with a row of big trees in front, which at certain seasons of the year emitted a peculiar and rather sickly odor. This house was located just below the wooden bridge which crossed, what Colonel Wright in his history calls the Whittlesey Creek, but is now known as the Wadham's Creek. Diagonally opposite, and above the bridge was the blacksmith shop of Albert Gabriel, one of the prominent men of Plymouth. He was the son of Henry Gabriel who, as a boy in September, 1818, in company of my father, then fifteen years of age, came here from Milford, Connecticut, with the family of John Flanigan. The party travelled with a two-horse covered wagon, the men walking, and were eleven days on the road.

A little farther down, on the corner of a road leading to the river, was the house of Charles E. Young. This house is yet standing, but changed in appearance; his son, L. A. Young, is one of the prominent merchants of Plymouth.

Further up the street, and about opposite where John B. Smith's Opera House now stands, was the frame store building of Chauncey Reynold's, which I don't think was conducted as a store very long. Mr. Reynolds was a very eccentric man, and as a storekeeper was in a class

all by himself. He was not very particular as to the manner in which his dry-goods were placed on his shelves, one end sometimes being on the counter and the other on the shelf. It was said of him that a customer who had purchased a pair of boots and wanted some molasses, but had nothing to carry it in, he solved the difficulty by putting the molasses in the boots. This may be an exaggeration. He had one son, Lazarus, who died in his young manhood.

Further up, and on the same side of the road was the Turner "tan house," with the tannery and vats in the rear. I have seen hides from these vats hanging to dry on the fences along the main road and extending down to the river. A little further up we come to the old Atherton barn, and next, the frame dwelling house of "Aunt" Fanny Turner, which is still standing. She was a good and clever old maiden lady who was known to most all, and who had lived there from my earliest recollection. Directly opposite this was the store of John Turner, first established in 1828, afterwards conducted by his sons, Franklin and James, under the firm name of Turner Brothers. This store was one of the earliest and most prominent stores of the town, and was conducted by the Turners for many years. The building is yet standing. Just above the store is the Turner homestead building, and below it, west, on the corner of the road leading to Turner's Ferry, is the one-story building with basement which was occupied when I was a boy by a family, I think, named Henry. John Madden also lived there at one time, and he kept a tailor's shop in a little building just below this, in which, at a later date, lived Thomas Wright. This tailor shop was afterwards for a number of years used as a millinery store.

On the same side of the road and a few yards below was another old landmark known as the old Atherton house. It was a large two-story building, but has now disappeared. Now, again continuing up the road, next comes the historic old Academy on the corner of Main and Academy Streets; this I will leave to describe in another chapter. Just above the Academy is yet standing the brick store building of the late Elijah C. Wadhams. This store as has been previously noted was one of the earliest brick buildings to be erected in the town. It was built some time not long prior to the year 1850, and was first occupied by Mr. Wadhams and Fuller Reynolds under the firm name of Wadhams and Reynolds, and Sterling Bedford was their clerk. This firm was dissolved after a few years and the business was continued by Mr. Wadhams, who was also engaged in the business of mining coal, until some time about the year 1880, when it was occupied by Messrs Ashley, Hunt & Co., until within the last two years. The second story of this building was for many years occupied as a lodge room by Shawnee Lodge of Odd Fellows, and by Plymouth Masonic Lodge.

Directly opposite this store was the Methodist Episcopal Church, the first church building—except the Academy—I believe, to have been erected in Plymouth. This church was later torn down to give room for the present handsome structure. The original building was taken to Forty-Fort by John B. Smith, and there set up by him in its original form, and dedicated as an independent church, and later it was destroyed by fire. It is a somewhat singular coincidence that the Methodist Church of Plymouth should be removed to Forty-Fort, and the old Presbyterian Church of Kingston, not far distant therefrom, and which was an old landmark of that town,

should be removed to Plymouth and set up on Franklin Street by the Primitive Methodist congregation, and that both these buildings should burn down. This old Kingston church I remember when as a boy, some time about the years 1844-5 or 1846, I attended Sunday School there, my parents having moved to Kingston for a short time about that period in order to receive the advantages of the Wyoming Seminary. That church, as I remember it, had very high back box pews with doors, a gallery on both sides and rear, and the customary two-story pulpit.

The present Methodist Church was erected in 1876. Just below this church, on the site now occupied by the Methodist Episcopal parsonage, stood for a number of years a two-story frame, private schoolhouse, which was removed sometime about 1890 by the Episcopal congregation, to their lot on Academy Street for use as a chapel.

Just above the Wadhams' store, still stands his former homestead, which was erected by a man named Bennett some time about the year 1852. After it had been vacated by Mr. Wadhams, it was transformed into a hotel and conducted respectively by A. M. Jeffords and John A. Gruver. It is now used as a dwelling.

Chapter IV.

Old M. E. Parsonage—Donation parties—H. Gaylord's Homestead—Old Store—James Macfarlane—First National Bank—Conrad Shafer—Draper Smith's Store—F. E. Spry—Pardee and Winters—C. L. Farnum—Jos. Preston—C. A. Kuschke—Gaylord's Store—Capt. Asher Gaylord—Gaylord's Railroad and Wharf—Dietrick's Hotel—Samuel Turner—James McAlarney—Eli Bittenbender—Querin Krothe—Noah Wadham's Homestead—Andrew Shupp—Geo. P. Richard's—"Squire" Brown—Nesbitt Homstead—Old Scenes—Elm Hill and Tree—John J. Shonk—Olewine—Culver—"Sammy" Gould.

ON the opposite side of the road from the Wadham's store building, and near where the late Parrish Coal Company tresseling crosses the road to the breaker, for many years stood a small two-story frame building which was used as the Methodist parsonage, and where annually, as was the custom with country churches in early days, was held the old-fashioned donation parties. These events were always looked forward to as a kind of red letter day in the calendar. The friends, young and old, from far and near, would gather there on these occasions; the elders during the daytime and the young people in the evening for a good time; each one bringing their contribution of money, or some article of family consumption, such as sugar, tea, coffee, flour, bread, cakes, etc.; usually more provisions than money, and as a feast was always expected on these occasions, naturally much of the donated provisions vanished with the guests. In this connection, I recall a story I once read which illustrates the utilitarian virtues of these beneficial jamborees; it is about a donation party which was tendered to a young country minister and his bride. Most all of the donors on that occasion brought as their contribution a pan full of biscuits, and after the young wife had shed copious tears over the situation, she per-

suaded her husband that the only appropriate use they could make of the hard crusted offerings would be to ornament the tops of the pickets surrounding their house with them. Near by this house and by the roadside, stood a large barn, and on the opposite side a little farther up still stands the mansion house of Henderson Gaylord, one of the early and most respected residents of the town. This is now occupied as a residence by Alexander Ferguson and Dr. G. R. Drake.

Nearly opposite this building, or about on the site of where now stands the residence of the late Mrs. Levi, there was formerly a small one-story building where I remember when a small boy of having gotten cream nuts from Draper Smith, who kept a small store in it. This was probably the store mentioned by Colonel Wright in his history of Plymouth, as the store where Joseph Wright, Benjamin Reynolds and Joel Rogers did business, and which was opened in 1812. On the corner just below this spot is the building now owned by the Stegmaier Brewing Company, where at one time lived James Macfarlane, the father of Mrs. Jeanette Lindsay and Thomas P. Macfarlane. He sunk the shaft which is just below the Chauncey Colliery at Avondale. In the upper end of this building was organized and instituted in 1864 the First National Bank of Plymouth, with Henderson Gaylord as President and William L. Wilson as Cashier. On the site of this building there formerly stood a small two-story frame dwelling house where, in the early 50's lived Conrad Shafer. He was a butcher, and his slaughterhouse was a small barn which stood on the river bank about where the Atlantic Refining Company's oil house is now located. He used to drive a market wagon through town during the summer season, behind a dashing pair of fast horses with sleigh bells, and was, I believe, the pioneer butcher of Plymouth.

Further up the street, in the building next above Dr. Ashley's residence was the store kept for many years, first by Draper Smith, and later by Draper Smith and Peter Shupp, under the firm name of Smith and Shupp. This building has been moved back and a new front built on, and at present is occupied by Mr. H. G. Davis, the undertaker. Next above that was the large frame building of F. E. Spry, the plumber and hardware dealer, occupied at one time by Pardee and Winters in the stove and hardware business, and also as a photograph gallery by a man named Richards, who also kept an ice cream parlor and eating house. This location is now occupied by the Shawnee Supply Company, owned by Ambrose West.

The house next above this is another one of the old landmarks. A two-story frame dwelling which, in my earliest recollection, I think, was occupied by C. L. Farnum, the son-in-law of Henderson Gaylord, and later by Joseph Preston, the grandfather of Mrs. Dr. H. L. Whitney. Eli Bittenbender also lived there at one time, and its latest occupant and owner was C. A. Kuschke, who for years and until the time of his death a few years since, kept a tailoring establishment there, after which his son, Henry, established a watchmaker's shop in it. Almost directly opposite this building, where is now the D. K. Spry block, stood a frame dwelling house and the store of Henderson Gaylord, erected in 1827, and where he continued in business until 1856, when he was succeeded by his son, Captain Asher, a brave officer of the 143rd Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, who was killed while leading his company in battle at Hatcher's Run, Virginia, and whose body was never recovered.

In the late 50's the second story of this store building was used for a private school, which was taught by

E. W. Matthews, a popular teacher, who afterwards became an officer in the Union Army. I remember a vocal concert being given in that room during that period by the celebrated Hutchinson family of singers.

Near the side of this store ran a railroad for the transportation of coal from the Gaylord mine to the river. It ran along what is now Walnut Street, and down the present Gaylord Avenue, where the road bed in front of the Armory and where the present Campbell buildings are now located, was some six to eight feet higher than the natural surface of the ground. The land in that locality being swampy, and affording very good skating in the winter.

The cars on this railroad were propelled by gravity and emptied into chutes at "Gaylord's Wharf," where the coal was loaded into canal boats. This wharf was located at a point about where the new bridge starts to cross the river.

Just across this railroad, on the corner opposite the Kuschke building, and what is now Hanover Street, stood the old Dietrick tavern with its long, covered front porch, at the extreme upper end of which was a wooden pump. This was the only hotel in town for many years, and was kept by George H. Dietrick and later by John Deen. One of Mr. Dietrick's daughters became the wife of Hon. Samuel G. Turner, State Senator, and prominent coal operator.

Next adjoining the hotel above, and about on the site now occupied by the Gas and Electric Light Company's office, was a small frame building which was occupied by William Renshaw as a tailor shop. This spot later became the site of a large frame dwelling house and tailoring establishment of James McAlarney, who

subsequently established a liquor store in it. This building, together with the hotel, was destroyed by fire in 1875 or 1876.

Mr. McAlarney was one of the prominent and progressive citizens of Plymouth. He erected the large McAlarney's Hall building in which for a number of years he conducted a general store. One of his daughters became the wife of Edwin Davenport.

On the opposite side of the road from this hotel was a small frame building occupied by Eli Bittenbender, who had formerly lived and kept a shoemaker's shop in the Kuschke building, and next above, on the site of Davenport's book store, was a one-story building, where Querin Krothe, a good natured old German, established the first barber shop in town. This building was afterwards converted into a drug store, conducted by Dr. C. H. Wilson. Just above this, in the building now occupied as a saloon by Andrew Fleming, was the cabinetmaker's shop of N. A. Stecker, which later was occupied by John Dennis, who kept a saloon there for a short time. Mr. Stecker was also the express agent of the L. & B. R. R., and just prior to the time of the outbreak of the war of the rebellion he did quite a thriving business selling daily newspapers, which would arrive on the evening train from New York and Philadelphia. The depot at that time was in a ramshackle old building located about in the rear of Dr. Ashley's present residence. The only subscribers for daily newspapers in the town prior to this time, were Samuel Wadhams and Henderson Gaylord, and people would often wonder how they ever could find time to read them, and now, nearly everybody takes one, and many two, besides a magazine or two.

Diagonally across the street from the Stecker building and about in the rear of the present Jacobs building,

there stood a long black house, in front of which was a large willow tree, and where formerly lived Noah Wadhams, son of the Rev. Noah, and which later, I believe, was occupied by James Owens, his son-in-law. There was a Dr. George Wadhams, a son of Noah, who was buried in the Reynolds burying ground in 1848.

Crossing the street again, on the site now occupied by the Ely House block, was a low frame building with a long porch and in front of which was a pump. This was occupied by Andrew Shupp, who kept a saloon there, and was later remodeled and occupied by George P. Richards as a dwelling and liquor store. Up to about 1855, I do not recollect of any other buildings on either side within the space from Centre Avenue up to Elm Hill, except a small frame building on the upper side of the creek, where lived "Squire" George Brown who kept a shoemaker's shop, and the first ice cream and oyster establishment I remember in the town. This building was located about on or near the site of the present Woolworth stores, and near this spot was formerly the house in which Colonel Ransom was captured by the Indians. The next was the Miner Nesbitt house in the rear of where George Durbin's drug store now is. This was where Robert Love lived and died. There was a large barn near this house, my earliest recollection of which was when I watched Theodore Hendershot hetcheling flax there.

About all the rest of this territory was occupied as farming lands. On the lower side of the road where the Rooney, and Moore Brothers building now stands, there was a large apple orchard. About 1862, the buildings between Centre Avenue and the Bull Run Crossing began to be erected. From about where the Plymouth National Bank stands and up to the Squire Brown house,

there was a board sidewalk on the upper side of the road, which stood five or six feet above the level of the road. Just above Joseph Switzer's (now Frederick's) furniture store, was later, the book store of A. F. Levi, and the Post Office kept by his mother; and there was also a clothing store kept by Priester & Schloss close by.

What is now known as Elm Hill, when I was a boy was called "Pismire Hill." Mr. John Shonk afterwards rechristened it by the more euphonious and aristocratic name of "Ant Hill," corrupted into "Anty." It subsequently became known as "Elm Hill," from the old elm tree which, until a few years ago occupied a conspicuous place on its brow.

There has been I think, a good deal of uncertain myth, and sentimental gush, connected with this tree. It shadowed an old black house standing a little way back from the road, on the site now occupied by the Elm Hill Congregational Church parsonage, and which I believe was known as the "Moss" or Morse house. This house was occupied by William Jenkins, familiarly known as "Major Cobus"; and for many years after that by his son also named William and who was a boat builder. About the year 1901, at which time he was upwards of 80 years of age, this man told the writer that he remembered that tree when it was a small sapling, so, if his story is correct, it is quite unlikely that it could have been a whipping post, if there was such a thing, a hundred or more years before.

Below this house, on the site of the present blacksmith shop of Fuller Hendershot, stood for many years, a one-story frame school house and about opposite this, I remember having seen long pine timbers elevated on trestles, where William Jenkins sawed out boat sides. Just above the Jenkins homestead, between where Arthur

Young recently lived, and the dwelling house and store of the late J. W. Weston, was a long row of low black buildings, three or four perhaps—and joined together, the farthest one up, occupied a short time as a store of some kind by the late J. W. Eno. Possibly it was the one at the lower end of this row which was called the Moss or Morse house above mentioned. Near the site of the present Groblewski drug store, formerly the residence and butcher shop of Marx Weil, but farther back from the road, was another old house with a long porch in front where lived Achen Atwell an old time canal boatman. All the rest of the surrounding territory here was used as farming lands.

On the hill farther up the road, on the site of the stately residence of the late John J. Shonk and now occupied by his daughter, Mrs. C. W. McAlarney, was a frame dwelling house occupied I believe by Miner Ransom.

Mr. Shonk was one of the early and most prominent residents of the town, and his son Albert is now one of its leading and influential citizens.

On the next lot above the Shonk homestead is yet standing, a two-story frame dwelling where lived a man named Olewine who moved out West many years ago. This house was afterwards for a number of years, the residence of Dr. C. H. Wilson. A few yards beyond this house many years ago, was the blacksmith shop of Hiram Culver, who lived in the house near by and which later became the residence for many years of the late J. W. Eno.

The next house above this, and one of the old landmarks, was the homestead of Jacob Gould, the ancestor of the family of that name. It stood on an eminence about opposite the No. 11 Breaker of the L. & W. Coal

Co., and on the lower side of the road, and near where the breaker is, was a large barn and on the same lot I think, was an apple orchard.

"Sammy" Gould used to live in this house, but later removed to Beech Grove near Berwick. He was a very jovial and rather witty personage, and when on his return home from visits to Plymouth, used to cause much vexation to the conductors on the L. & B. R. R. by pulling the bell rope and causing the train to stop opposite his residence, which was some distance away from the station.

Chapter V.

Coal Street—Oliver Davenport—Edwin Davenport—Christopher Garrahan — Patrick Cullen — Phoebe Pringle — Carpenter Rinus—French's Grist Mill—John Smith—"Aunt" Charry Clark—The French Tunnel—Francis J. Smith—Calathumpian Serenades—The Horse Fiddle—The "Big Coal Bed"—William Dennis—Richard Egbertson—Robt. Davenport—Samuel Vanloon—Benj. and Fuller Reynolds—Calvin and Samuel Wadhams—Manny Wharram—Benj. Pringle—Sam'l Lewis—Sam'l Harrison.

RETURNING now to the lower end of town, and going up Coal Street, the first house on the right hand side of the road, was that of Oliver Davenport. This house is yet standing and was occupied by him until the time of his death a good many years ago.

Mr. Davenport was one of the town's prosperous and respected farmers. One of his sons, Edwin, late president of the First National Bank, who died in 1913, was the father of former Congressman Hon. Stanley W. and of Andrew Livingston, a prominent merchant of Plymouth and Luzerne; another son, Dr. Fuller, was a member of the U. P. crew which contested with the

famous Henley crew in a regatta on the river Thames a few years ago. Between this house and the main road there was formerly an apple orchard in which was a tree of luscious "Sugar Sweets" which in early summer was the strong point of attraction for the boys of the neighborhood.

Just above the house, on Coal Street, stood the barn, and a little beyond, is a white house where formerly lived Christopher Garrahan a well known and respected citizen. This house later became the property and residence of his son-in-law, Dennison Pringle. Across the creek on the left hand side of the road further up, and extending down near the grove, was a long double dwelling house which at an earlier day was occupied by Christopher Garrahan on the one side, and Patrick Cullen on the other. In the latter house there would occasionally be held on Sundays, services of the Catholic religion. This house was afterwards occupied by Carpenter Rinus. At the lower end of this row and just in the grove, was the residence of Mrs. Phoebe Pringle. She was a tailoress and used to make all of our juvenile clothes, and I recall her process of fitting the garments; the rude adjustment of position of the patient model, pertinent to her pinning and basting operations was truly a *trying* ordeal. One of her daughters married Freeman Polk, a long time respected citizen of Plymouth.

A little further up the road beyond this row of houses was a small dwelling, the residence of Freeman Samis, and across the creek still further up stood the big red grist mill of my father.

This mill was first built to be run by water power supplied from a dam, or reservoir just above, but was afterwards converted into a steam mill. The sulphur water from the mines above soon played havoc with the

machinery and it was finally abandoned. This mill building was, until quite recent years used as tenement dwellings but now stands in ruins.

"The mill wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt,
The rafters have tumbled in,
And a quiet that crawls 'round the wall as you pass,
Takes the place of the olden din."

On an elevation just above the mill and beside the old dam, was the residence of George Seiple the miller, who was succeeded by a Mr. Fisher, and a few yards to the southeast yet stands the homestead of my other stepgrandfather, John Smith, the brother of Abijah and who were the pioneer coal operators of the Wyoming Valley. In front, and around this house in its spacious yard, were numerous black cherry and other fruit trees, and on the north side was a thrifty apple orchard and a good spring of water. Later this house was occupied by Charity ("Aunt Charry") Clark, as clever an old soul as ever lived. She had three sons, George, William, and Burr, and they afterwards removed to Ohio. More recently this house was owned and occupied by David Levi, a respected citizen of Plymouth and at one time prominent coal operator.

John Smith was a man of positive and decisive character. It was said of him that at one time he was elected or appointed to the office of tax collector contrary to his wishes, and that in retaliation for the honor conferred, he served notice on the people that on a certain date he would call for the taxes and would brook no delay in the payment. Probably neither before nor since, was a tax duplicate settled up more speedily.

Just across the creek from the old mill, there is the evidence of a tunnel under the hill which my father had driven for some distance and I well remember my labori-

ous efforts in lugging the drills of "Hank" and Munn Massaker from there up to Gabriel's shop to be sharpened, and then back again. Close to the entrance to this tunnel, in a little frame house lived the family of Freeman Lamoreaux. The driving of this tunnel was abandoned and the one some distance further up was opened, near where the L. & W. B. Coal Company's engine house now stands. In this tunnel Edward Crowell was killed by a fall of rock.

On the hill to the left, just above this first tunnel, and near the site of the old Washington head house and plane, and the entrance to the classic precincts of bed bug row, stands what remains of the once beautiful home of Francis J. Smith. This place was laid out in beautiful terraces and was a very attractive spot. He moved to Ohio where some of his descendants still reside. Mr. John J. Shonk at one time lived in this house. Just opposite, across the creek and at the head of the old dam was another quite large dwelling house but I don't remember who lived there.

Further up the creek on the right hand side were several small houses where lived Zeph. Barber and Mrs. Partington and Munn Massaker. On the left side of the road, and just above the engine house before mentioned, was a small house occupied by a man I think, named Aaron Young, who was killed in a fist fight while participating in a Calathumpian serenade given to Ira Davenport in celebration of his marriage. This house was at one time occupied by Fred Myers, father of the late Robert Myers.

In reference to these Calathumpian serenades, honors which it was not uncommon to tender to newly married couples,—one of the principal musical instruments of the band was the "horse fiddle," which I believe is now a

forgotten instrument of melody. Its construction consisted of an open topped dry goods box with a well rosined board or rail for a bow, and when vigorously wielded across the top of the box would send forth notes of melody both horrible and terrible.

Continuing on, a little further up to the extreme end of the road was the "Big Coal Bed" which was opened by the Smith brothers about the year 1807. Here are several enormous openings or caverns in the side of the mountain, where we boys used to go to get soft pieces of stones or slate to make slate pencils. Through one of these large openings which are now almost completely closed with fallen rocks and debris, teams would enter, the driver, with lamp in hand, leading the horses far in to the breast, or place where the miners were at work, where the team would be turned and the wagon loaded and then driven to the river bank, the coal to be loaded into canal boats. I have often ridden into this mine in the wagons and watched the operations, my father being the operator of the mine.

Coming back down the road, about half way to the old mill, is a bridge leading to a road which runs past the school house on "Temperance Hill." Turning abruptly to the left, on the right hand side of the roadway was the residence of Henry Massaker, and then came a stone house, the residence of William Dennis, an old and respected resident, who gave the locality the name it now bears. A little beyond, was another stone building, the residence of Richard Egbertson where he lived for many years and where afterwards resided his son Henderson, who was a painter. Richard Egbertson was a stone mason and plasterer by trade, and withal, I used to think a very wonderful fisherman. He could station himself on the river bank where no one else would

THE BIG COAL BED

Permission of the Rotograph Co.

think of fishing, cast in his lines, and invariably catch a big string of large fish. The manner of plastering a house in those days, before plastering laths were invented, was to tack a thin board on the ceiling or side of the room to be plastered, and then with a hatchet and wooden wedge, make interstices in the board to receive and hold the plaster. Evidences of this method may still be found in the old buildings.

Passing on, beyond the school house was a row of red houses, story and a half high, where lived George Puterbaugh and Wesley Lewis. Some distance further on, on the corner of Davenport Street and Shawnee Avenue, stood the mansion house, with its spacious grounds and towering elms of Robert Davenport one of the earliest residents of Plymouth. He was the father of Samuel Davenport. A little beyond was the two-story dwelling with the wide porch in front, of Samuel Vanloon, a prosperous farmer and one time County Sheriff. He had a large family of boys, of whom not one I believe are now living. Beyond this, stood his barns and sheds, and then came those of Benjamin Reynolds another old time and prominent resident. Mr. Reynolds' residence was on the upper side of the road, where afterwards his son J. Fuller, lived for many years. The present structure replaces the original building, which burned down some time during the early 50s, and within recent years was the residence of Oscar Lance. The widow of Mr. Fuller Reynolds, a very amiable woman, died quite recently at a very advanced age, in Scranton, where some of their children now reside and occupy positions of prominence.

Still further on, on the corner of Academy Street and Shawnee Avenue, stood the old colonial mansion house, with its broad piazza and spacious hallways, of Calvin Wadhams, a pioneer resident of Plymouth and which for

many years was the residence of his son Samuel, the father of Elijah. The large lot laid out in terraces, and planted with ample shade and ornamental trees and shrubs, extended down to the creek. On the side and near the kitchen was the wash house, and next to the road was an ice house, and on the opposite corner stood the carriage house. On the upper side stood a number of barns, sheds and store houses for grain, etc. Mr. Wadhams was a prosperous farmer, and both he and his son, were for many years prominent and influential men of the town, Elijah being at one time a member of the State Senate.

Some twenty or more years ago, the Plymouth Planing Mill Company reshingled this house, and it was found that the old shingles had been nailed on with hand forged nails. In early days, houses were built to last, and this one, although it has been changed in appearance and altered to suit the requirements of tenants, is apparently in as good condition as ever. A little farther to the east was the story and a half house, which for many years was the residence of Emanuel Wharram, Mr. Wadhams' English farmer. He had a large family and moved to Ohio a good many years ago and where some of his descendants yet reside.

Up on the hill from the Wadhams house and I believe somewhere in the vicinity of the present Shawnee Cemetery, was the residence of Benjamin Pringle another old Plymouth resident. He had two daughters, one named Martha, and the other, Bertha or Berthia. Not far from the location of this house was the residence of Samuel Lewis, an old resident, and where later lived Samuel Harrison whose daughter married Clayton Young.

THE OLD ACADEMY

Chapter VI.

Early Religious Services—The Old Academy—Lorenzo Dow—Great Religious Revival—Revs. Miles and Snowden—Presbyterians—A Personal Episode and Erection of a Church—First Church Edifice—Christian Church—Early Ministers of —Early Schools and Teachers—The Bachelor's Club—Their Rules and Proceedings—Benj. Parke—Other Teachers—Corporal Punishment—The Old Lecture Room School House —The Spelling School.

THE first church building to be erected in Plymouth was undoubtedly the old Academy. Prior to its erection, Col. Wright in his history of Plymouth says, that religious services were held in private houses. I have already mentioned where the few Catholics in the town sometimes held their services in the house of Patrick Cullen, and I have been told that John Madden taught the Catholic children their catechism in his house next to the Turner store.

The Old Academy—now transformed into dwellings—was erected, probably by common contributions, some time in the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The entrance was by high stone steps facing Academy street, and leading to a wide vestibule, on either side of which were stairs leading to the second story which was fitted up with high backed benches for pews, which extended on each side from the centre aisle to the wall. In the centre of the aisle were several wooden columns to support the ceiling, the columns extending the length of the aisle, at the eastern end of which was the high pulpit with a ballustred stairway of some eight or ten steps on the side ascending into it. In front of, and a few feet distant from the pulpit, on a raised platform was a picket fence enclosing perhaps two thirds the space in front. At short intervals along the walls hung the sconces or candle holders, which at even-

ing services the members of the congregation were expected to supply with tallow candles. I remember of having attended some of those meetings with my mother who would take with her, her quota of illuminating material. The collection bags, or pockets of black velvet, were attached to the ends of long red poles whereby the toll gatherers would be enabled to collect pennies from the sinners seated on the farthest ends of the benches.

The first story of the building was divided into two sections, and fitted up with long desks and benches, and a blackboard on the wall for school purposes.

Tradition says, that before this building was entirely completed, Lorenzo Dow,—a kind of Billy Sunday—traveling evangelist, held revival services there, and on account of the large audiences he drew, some fear was felt regarding the safety of the building. The memory of Mr. Dow is still perpetuated in the names of some of the children of his admirers. It is probably about this period, that a great religious fervor overspread the valley. The coming of the millennium, and the date set for the destruction of the world was predicted, and it was said that some prospective saints had their ascension robes prepared for the occasion.

In my early years I do not remember of any regular church services being held there, the building was free for the use of any denomination who wished to make use of it. Rev. Geo. D. Miles, an Episcopalian minister of Wilkes-Barre used to preach occasionally on Sunday afternoons, and on other occasions ministers of other denominations would hold services on Sunday mornings, and sometimes evenings, and usually there were Sunday Schools quite regularly held; but until some time after the Presbyterian Communicants under the guidance of Rev. E. H. Snowden were organized as a congregation

in 1856, and after the M. E. Church was erected, there were I believe, no regular services held there.

The old Academy was for many years, the only place in the town where public assemblies of any kind could be properly held, it was in fact the public hall, and there, were held political rallies, meetings for discussion of matters of public interest, lectures for educational purposes or profit, and even shows were wont to be held there. I remember of an Indian show being held there, and on one occasion an Irish comedian called "Dublin Dan," was obliged to hold two performances on the same evening in order to accommodate his audiences.

In this connection, while it may appear self-laudatory, perhaps out of place, and withal not entirely commendable, yet, it being a matter of unwritten history I feel constrained to relate a personal incident which goes to prove the truth of the saying, that out of evil sometimes good will grow.

Some time about the year 1865, there was some kind of a gathering of the congenial young people of the town,—perhaps a Fourth of July picnic—at which Mose Wadhams,—the brother of Elijah,—and myself were the ringleaders. It was decided that we would wind up the festivities of the day with a dance in the evening. There being no other available or desirable place in town where we could go, and the Academy being a public hall, we fixed upon that as the place, and accordingly in the evening, there we assembled with Wm. Hatcher and his fiddle. The space between the pulpit and the benches was ample for the formation of two sets of quadrilles and there we spent the evening.

I was engaged at the time in Wadhams' store which, like other stores at that time, was a rendezvous for the gathering of congenial spirits in the evenings. On the

evening following this escapade, there were assembled in the store Deacon Chas. Hutchinson, Bryce R. Blair, Robt. Love, Tom Macfarlane and perhaps one or two others. I was seated at the desk and before long Mr. Hutchinson launched forth on the enormity of the offence which had been perpetrated in the house of God the evening before. I felt the poignancy of his shafts which I realized were leveled at my head but discreetly kept silent. After the matter had been fully discussed in all its heinous phases, Mr. Blair declared that it was a shame that the Presbyterian congregation which was large enough, could not have a place of their own where they could worship in peace and safety, and promised that he would see to it that they would have such a place, and turning to me he dictated a form of subscription list for that purpose. I wrote out two of these and he took one, and the next morning started out to canvass downtown; the other one I think Mr. Hutchinson took to canvass uptown, and Wilkes-Barre. In a short time thereafter enough subscriptions were obtained to warrant the commencement of the erection of the present church and parsonage in 1866. I have since entertained a lingering hope that my indirect instrumentality, by this sacriligous act, in further extending the influence of Christianity would, in some measure serve as an atonement for my many sins and delinquencies.

The first church edifice to be erected after that of the Academy I believe was the Methodist Church, of which I have before given a description. The most active, if not the earliest organized sect, however, was that of the Christian congregation. They were organized in 1834 and their present church edifice was erected in 1857 by H. R. Noll, of Lewisburg, Pa., and who afterwards married Miss Almina Davenport, daughter of the

late Samuel Davenport. Among the early and active ministers of that congregation, I recall the names of Elders Lane, Richmond, Montgomery, Hyatt, Hayes, Clark, and last, Rev. Knipp, to whose efforts are due the added improvements to the church and the erection of their new parsonage on the site of the one which for many years has stood on Shawnee Avenue.

It would be too much of an undertaking to attempt to describe the many other handsome churches of different denominations that have since been erected throughout the town; but the largest and most pretentious one is that of the Catholic denomination erected under the auspices of Rev. T. J. Donahoe on Church Street, a very large and valuable property.

My earliest recollection of the schools of Plymouth dates back to those kept in the Academy. Col. Wright in his historical sketches speaks of a schoolhouse located on Elm Hill which was torn down about 1815. He also gives the names of some of the early teachers in the old Academy, one of whom, Thos. Patterson, I have often heard my mother and my aunt speak of in terms of high commendation. There was another one, however, named Benjamin Parke whom I have heard spoken of by old people, and who singularly enough he does not mention, although he evidently taught there in 1825 and was one of his associates.

I have in my possession an old record book of a literary society, organized at that time, and of which apparently, Mr. Parke was the leading spirit. The members of that society were: Benjamin Parke, Wm. C. Reynolds, H. B. Wright, C. A. Reynolds, Luther Nesbitt, Samuel French, Samuel Wadhams, E. Chamberlin, C. Atherton, Caleb Wright, H. Gaylord, Adnah Atherton and G. D. Turner.

The following extracts from the records of that society, which are mostly written in beautiful penmanship, apparently by Mr. Parke, will no doubt be of interest. On the outside of the paper cover of the book was the motto of the society, all except the first two lines of which are obliterated and are:

> Of birth or blood we cannot boast,
> Nor gentry does our club afford.

The record reads, "On Friday the 16th of September, 1825, a number of young men met at the store of Gaylord and Reynolds, and agreed to form themselves into a society to be called the Bachelors Club of Plymouth; a system of regulations were adopted; Benjamin Parke was chosen President for the next meeting, which is to be on Wednesday the 21st inst."

The rules and regulations of the club, which are rather stringent, declared: "This club shall not consist of more than 16 members, two-thirds of whom shall be Bachelors. Meetings to be held weekly. The object of the society, "mental improvement," for which purpose at every meeting a question upon some subject shall be fairly and candidly discussed, speeches limited to 30 minutes at a time." Religion and politics were disbarred from discussion, and "No profane, obscene or indecent language, or irreverent treatment of the sacred Scriptures to be tolerated," and "No member on any pretence whatever shall reveal any of the secrets of this society, or mention them to any but members; and particularly if any one shall do it with a view to ridicule or laugh at any of the rest of the members, he shall be expelled, the society and the members requested to avoid him as a friend or comrade."

No member could be admitted without "the unanimous consent of all the members present." Any trans-

gression of the rules were punishable for "the first offence by reprimand by the President, for the second, silenced for the evening, and for the third, expulsion." The President and four members had the power to transact any "common business of the club," but a majority of the members were necessary to expel a member. The time of meeting was half-past six o'clock and any member who was not present at 7 o'clock without a sufficient excuse, was to be fined 6¼ cents, and the President was to "pay 12½ cents for non-attendance at any time."

In accordance with their agreement, their first meeting was held on Wednesday, September 21st, 1825, when they "agreed to discuss the following question: 'Do the highest class of people enjoy more happiness than the lowest?'" Decided in the negative.

Other questions discussed at subsequent meetings, and which may serve as interesting subjects of discussion by the present generation, were:

"Is avarice a worse vice than intemperance?"

"Do mankind derive more pleasure and happiness from anticipation than participation?"

"Is the prodigal a greater nuisance to society than the miser?"

The next two questions may perhaps be of interest to the female suffragists:

"Do outward accomplishments tend more to inspire love toward the female sex, than real worth?" Argument and question decided in the negative.

"Would a widow at the age of 30, make a better wife than a maid of the same age?" Argument and question decided in the negative.

This last question, discussed November 29th, apparently "busted up" the club, for they do not appear to have held any further meetings.

Benjamin Parke afterwards became a very prominent

Royal Arch Mason, and in 1860 was the presiding officer of the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania of Royal Arch Masons.

The earliest teachers in the Academy within my recollection were Geo. W. Freeman, who boarded at my mother's when I was quite young; other names I recall were Dibble and Turner; the latter was called "little Turner," on account of his diminutive size and whom I remember particularly as being an inveterate user of tobacco and for lack of a cuspidor would expectorate on the floor by his seat. I have no remembrance of any other than the common branches of learning having been taught. Quill pens were used for writing, the teacher with his "pen-knife" keeping the pens in order. It was some little time after I had begun to write that steel pens came into use. The public school system was then in its infancy, and there was much prejudice in the minds of many against "free schools." The minimum length of the school term was four months. The common methods of maintaining proper discipline was by means of a ruler applied on the hand, or by the use of a good sized cudgel cut from a tree or bush, which would frequently, at unexpected times and on inopportune occasions fall heavily across the shoulders of the transgressor, and for very serious offences the guilty one would be required to step out on the floor and remove his coat. Sometimes on these occasions stubborn resistance would be offered on the part of the culprit, and then a struggle would ensue which, if it did not inspire terror, would afford a sort of diversion for the boys.

The little schoolhouse located at the corner of Coal and Main Streets with which I am more familiar, mention of which has heretofore been made, was moved when I was quite young, to a position directly opposite my father's

house, where for many years the young ideas were taught to sprout. This building was fitted up with a high pulpit on a raised platform at the far end, on each side of which were long desks with benches, and transverse rows of desks and benches extending down the room on both sides of the aisle; and in front of and facing the pulpit were recitation seats. This was also called the "Lecture room." I don't know why, unless to give it a distinctive name, for I don't remember of any lectures being given there, although there may have been. Religious services were held there in later years by a Welsh congregation.

Among the names of early teachers here I can only recall those of a man named Brown who ran away with his wife's sister; one named Box, and one I think named Curtis, and Miss Julia Reynolds. The most familiar and popular one, however, was James Garrahan, late of Dallas. He held the position for a number of winters.

One of the prominent and favorite features of the schools of those days, and one I think that could be followed with great advantage to the pupils of to-day, was the "Spelling School." These would be held sometimes as concluding exercise of the week, and frequently on an evening, when they were occasions of very great interest, and always drew a crowded house. The custom was to choose two recognized good spellers as leaders and contestants, who would range themselves on opposite sides of the room, which had previously been arranged for the occasion, and they would choose their spellers promiscuously from the audience. The ones so selected would take their places on the floor as called, beside their respective leader until the lines extended the entire length of the room in equal numbers. Then the teacher would announce to one of the leaders the word to be spelled and if spelled correctly, the next word would be given to his opponent and

so on alternately down the line. In case of a miss in spelling the delinquent would take his or her seat and the line would close up. The side which remained standing, or were not "spelled down" at the close of the contest were declared the winners. There were some extraordinary good spellers in those days, and these occasional contests created much friendly rivalry among the scholars and it was considered quite a compliment to be selected as a "speller."

At one term of school I remember of having attended there, "Newt" Smith selected the pulpit as his seat, and frequently when the teacher's back would be turned he would amuse the audience with his antics.

This old schoolhouse was in recent years converted into the ignominious and base purpose of a tool and oil house by the L. & W. B. Coal Co., but has now entirely disappeared, and such is fame.

Chapter VII.

Farming Methods—Threshing and Marketing Grain—Flax Industry—The Old Spinning Wheels—Dipping Candles—Grist Mills—Coal Industry—Building of Arks and Boats—Shawnee Against the World—Origin of Slogan—Methods of Preparing and Shipping Coal—Old Records—Coal Markets—Cost of Mining and Selling—Prices for Coal—Hard Times—Deplorable Conditions—Wages and Cost of Commodities.

BEFORE the coal industry was developed, and Plymouth had become a mining town, farming was the principal, if not the only occupation of the inhabitants. The broad fertile acres of the Shawnee Flats, and the stony and less productive fields on the mountain and hillsides furnished employment for nearly everybody. Wages for good farm hands would average about seventy-five

cents a day, and the hours of labor were from sun to sun, and then came the ordinary "chores" about the barn and house—caring for the animals and getting in the firewood and coal.

Hay and grain when I was a boy were all cut with scythe and cradle, and one of my youthful tribulations I well remember in that connection, was the task of turning the grindstone to sharpen those detested implements. Wages during the haying and harvesting season rose from a dollar to a dollar and a quarter a day which was considered almost fabulous, but swinging a scythe or cradle all day was very hard work.

On these occasions it was a very common custom, and indeed was expected to have a bottle of whiskey stand beside the water jug in the field, and about ten o'clock a generous luncheon would be carried to the harvesters. On these particular occasions the labor of providing for a gang of ravenous workmen, and in fact, on many other days of the year, the women of the household did not enjoy what in vulgar parlance is now called a "snap."

While I have no distinct recollection of how or where flax was cultivated, that it was one of the important features of agricultural industry and domestic manufacture there can be no doubt. I have often witnessed and participated in the process of "breaking and hetcheling flax." The plant which grew to about the size of timothy grass, having a hard and woody exterior or bark, was first passed through the "flax break" which in construction resembled somewhat a shaving horse or bench, with a long wooden spring handle or hammer, and manipulated by hand power. This machine would break up the hard woody stem when it would be drawn through the hetchel—a board or block filled with long iron teeth

something like a comb—which would remove the coarse material and tow from the fibre or flax.

I have a distinct remembrance, when I was quite a large boy, of wearing a blue checked suit of linen clothes of my mother's manufacture of which I was very proud.

The wool industry was a very important factor in the domestic economy, and the whirr and buzz of the old spinning wheel was a very familiar sound in many of the dwellings. The wool having been properly prepared by means of some now forgotten process, into long slender strings or rolls, these were singly connected to the end of a long iron or steel spindle which was made to swiftly revolve by means of a large wooden wheel; the spinner holding the roll in her left hand would walk slowly backward and forward, drawing the twisted thread to the end of the roll and then retracing her steps in winding it on the spindle, a process necessarily involving a great many steps in the course of a day's spinning.

When the spindle was filled with yarn it would be wound on the arms of a reel, which, after making a certain number of revolutions would record a click, indicating the completion of a knot or skein. There were several other implements or machines employed in the process of manufacture and preparation, one of which was called a "swift," but their uses, and even their respective appellations are now long forgotten and it is doubtful whether many now living can remember them. After the yarn by various processes had been manipulated into the required form, it was consigned to the dye tub to receive whatever color pleased the fancy. All the various processes of this once familiar domestic industry can now be safely relegated among the lost arts, along with those of making soap and starch and mince pies.

There was yet another very important industry of home consumption which deserves mention, that of the manufacture of dipped tallow candles which were the principal, and in fact often the only convenient effective means of illumination in early days, although I have heard of instances of fat pine knots being used for that purpose.

The modus operandi of dipping candles was to slip the loop of the cotton wicks which had been cut to the desired lengths, on to slim elder stalks or round wooden rods of about two feet in length, say six or eight wicks on each rod. These would be arranged on horizontal supports holding perhaps a dozen or more rods. The operator, seated by the side of the frame supporting the rods, and within easy reaching distance, beginning at one end, would lift the rods and slowly dip the wicks into a pot of hot tallow by her side, and by the time the end of the frame was reached the tallowed wicks would be sufficiently hardened to repeat the process, and thus, by slow degrees, the candles, like icicles, would grow to the desired size, and they were much more desirable and lasting than those of the moulded variety.

The many progressive stages made within the last hundred years in methods of illumination, successively from tallow dips and dirty whale oil lamps, to dangerous camphine or burning fluid, and kerosene to gas, and finally, the wonderful perfection attained, and the saving of labor afforded through means of the magic electric button device, can scarcely be realized and appreciated by the present generation.

After the crops had been all gathered, and the fall work completed, then just before the holiday season came the butchering, and after that threshing of grain, which was sometimes done by having the horses and colts

tramp over it on the barn floor, but was more largely done by means of the flail, the threshers receiving their pay in grain, the amount thereof being governed by the number of bushels threshed.

In the early days Easton was the principal market place for the farmers' products which were mostly hauled there on sleds during the winter season, but at the time of which I write the millers and merchants of the valley were the principal customers. There being no bakers' shops in those days, every household baked their own bread, cakes and pies. The grain for the flour and meal was taken to the mill to be ground, the miller receiving his pay therefor in tolls which he deducted.

It was not an unusual custom to carry small grists to the mill on horseback, the sack being thrown across the horse's back in front of the rider.

I have heard it said, but I can't vouch for the truth of it, that some riders, in order to balance the bag on the horse's back, would put a stone of equal weight in the other end.

The mills to which the grain would be taken to be ground into flour or meal, besides the one of my father's already mentioned, were Shupp's mill up near the present L. & B. Railroad junction; Pugh's mill, which was located a short distance up Harvey's Creek, and Raub's and Dorrance's mills in Mill Hollow, now Luzerne Borough. All of these mills I think were run by water power. There was another mill up Wadham's Creek but that did not pretend to do much business. I have taken grists to all of these mills.

The coal industry as has been previously noted, commenced here in 1807 by the Smith brothers, at what was generally known as the "Big Coal Bed" on Coal Street, the coal being hauled on wagons down to wharves on the

river bank where it was loaded, at first on arks, and later, after the North Branch Canal was built, into canal boats.

The principal roads to the river over which the coal was hauled was one just above the Samuel Davenport store; another, at the corner of which stood C. E. Young's house; both of these roads leading to my father's wharf. One by Turner's store leading to Turner's and Ransom's wharves, and yet another, near the present M. E. parsonage and leading to Wadham's wharf. All of these roads are now closed up and but little evidence, if any, remains of their former existence.

The arks, which I have mentioned, and I believe also most of the flat bottomed boats used in transporting the coal to market, were built in what was called the "basin," a natural formation of the land situated near Wadham's Creek between Gabriel's blacksmith shop and the river, which every spring, at the time of high water would fill up, when the arks or boats could be floated down the creek to the river.

Those flat-bottomed boats came to be known all along the line of the canal as "Shawnee boats," and by reason of the progressive and aggressive qualities of their respective crews, I believe originated the familiar watchword of "Shawnee against the world."

The method of preparing and shipping coal to market in those early days was very simple. There were but two recognized sizes of coal, "coarse or lump," and "fine coal." The former size was just as it came from the mine, in lumps often as large as one or two men could handle, and the latter, perhaps as large as a man's two hands down to chestnut size, or what would not easily pass through the meshes of a "screen shovel." The coal was hauled from the mine to the river and piled on the bank and from thence loaded into boats with wheelbar-

rows. All pieces of slate were thrown out, and that on the large lumps removed with a pick. This primitive method of preparing coal was, in some respects, superior to those of the present day, in that there was at least some pretentions made of honesty. Nowadays the slate is ground up and skillfully mixed with the coal for weight and everything goes.

The use of arks for the transportation of coal was probably abandoned about the year 1840. I have in my possession an old account book which was kept by my father, in which there is a credit of $24.00 given to Adnah Atherton for "building an ark" in 1838, and in 1839 a credit of $25.00 was given to Daniel Gardiner for a like service. In February, 1841, is a record of "boat sides" being hauled by Samuel Vanloon, and another of "slitting railing for boat" by Alba Bangs, and also of "boat plank" having been purchased.

In April of that year begins the first record of coal being shipped by boats. The average boat load was sixty tons and was shipped to Bloomsburg, Danville, Harrisburg, Columbia, Lancaster, Marietta, Milton and other points, the principal market, however, being Danville, to Peter Baldy for his furnaces.

The coal industry during the 40's evidently did not yield enormous dividends. The miner received 43⅓ cents a ton for digging, and about the same price was paid for boating service to Danville. A cargo of 60 tons delivered there in 1841 was sold for $2.25 a ton, or $135. The cost of the same was:

For Mining	$26.00	
Boating Service ...	26.55	
Canal Tolls	16.31	$68.86
Apparent profit		$66.14

But in that apparent profit no account is taken of royalty for coal, the cost of carting from the mine to the river, or the loading into boats; so the net profit was considerably less than 50 cents a ton.

On a cargo of 57 tons sent to Harrisburg, the cost of boating was $87.74 or $1.54 a ton, and the canal tolls were $70. On another cargo of 58 tons to Marietta, the cost of running was $1.00 a ton, and the tolls $53.54.

During those years there seemed to be no stable or fixed price for coal in the markets. The operators apparently were glad to sell their production at whatever price they could get for it. Thus, in 1841, while the cost of mining and delivery remained the same, it was sold at Bloomsburg for $1.50 a ton. From about 1842 to 1846 it sold in Danville for $1.87½ and $1.75, at Columbia for $1.25, and Marietta for $1.80 per ton, and in many instances was largely paid for in general merchandise, horses and buggies, pork, pigs, iron pots and kettles, earthenware, whiskey, in fact in almost any or everything that could be utilized in the ordinary process of living. Those indeed were strenuous times of living. The State government had embarked in the banking business and in internal improvements, the building of canals and railroads almost indiscriminately, and for which purpose loans had been negotiated, the interest on which was provided for by further loans.

In 1839 David R. Porter was installed as Governor, and he found the government at the mercy of wily politicians and dishonest contractors. The country was flooded with State banknotes, many of which would not stay good over night. Monies obtained by loans for projected improvements and necessary repairs thereto, had been ruthlessly squandered or stolen, and the purposes for which the money had been borrowed, ignored or

neglected, with the treasury bankrupt, and in 1843 the State was unable to pay the interest on her loans.

Wages of workmen from about 1839 to 1848 ranged from 50 to 75 cents a day, and they received their pay mostly in household necessaries, which were largely supplied from the private family stores of the employer.

Prices of flour during this period ranged from five to eight dollars a barrel; coal at retail $1.56 a load delivered; a load estimated at one and a quarter tons; coffee 15 to 17 cents a pound; tea, $1.12½ a pound; salt and smoked meats, 10 cents; butter, 17 cents; sugar, 11 to 12½ cents; molasses, 62½ to 75 cents; whale oil, 65 to 75 cents a gallon; powder, $2.75 a keg; potatoes, 25 to 31 cents a bushel; wheat, $1.12½, and corn, 56 cents a bushel.

Chapter VIII.

Early Coal Operators and Mines—Choke Island—Broderick and Conyngham's Troubles—Exit of Individual Operators and the Entrance of Corporations—Capture of Fugitive Slaves—Brutalities of the Fugitive Slave Law—Uncle Tom's Cabin.

AMONG the early coal operations in Plymouth, the Gaylord mine and railroad has already been described. There was another similar railroad extending to the river which is now known as the Bull Run Railroad, and on which the cars were propelled by gravity from the old mine now owned by the D. & H. Co. and located in Poke Hollow. This mine, I think, was first operated by William Patton, and afterwards by David Levi, who also conducted a store near the mine, and whose first stock of merchandise was negotiated for by my father. Later, Messrs. Charles Bennett, A. J. Davis, and a man from New Jersey named James Martin, came

into control under the firm name of Bennett, Davis & Co., and they were succeeded by Mr. J. C. Fuller. The old "mud tunnel" up the road leading to "Jersey Hill" was operated a short time, I think, by the Turners. In 1846 there was an operation somewhere here, conducted for a short time by E. Bulkley, Caleb Shonk and Draper Smith, and called the Draper Smith tunnel. I have been unable to locate that mine unless it may have been the one just above the first French tunnel on Coal Street, or the mud tunnel which was in operation on a small scale about that period. A little way southwest of the mud tunnel was the Ransom coal bed, which was abandoned before my remembrance. Michael Shonk was killed in this mine in 1846 (the father of John J. Shonk).

The Jersey coal mine, which is now under lease to the D. L. and W. R. R. Co., was first opened by Joseph Wright, and was later operated by my father until the late 50's when it was operated by Robert Love and the Hutchinson brothers as Robert Love and Co. They built a railroad and plane on which cars were run by gravity down to Chutes near the L. & B. R. R., at a point on the main road a little way below, or west of present Wright slope and fan house. It was from those Chutes that the first cars of coal were hauled over the L. & B. R. R. from Plymouth, about 1855 or 1856.

One of the early coal mines to be opened in this locality was the famous "Grand Tunnel" mine opened by Freeman Thomas—Col. Wright says—about 1828. It is located at the place named from it—Grand Tunnel.

About the year 1852 or 1853 this mine began to be operated by Mr. William L. Lance, who later became one of the most progressive and prominent citizens of Plymouth. The coal from this mine was run into Chutes on the river bank near by, and then loaded into

boats. In the river, about opposite the mouth of this mine, there was a small island formed, which Mr. Lance desired to utilize in his operations, but Jamison Harvey, whose coal mine was on the land adjoining the Grand Tunnel, claimed the ownership of it. They met on the island, and after wrangling over the matter, Mr. Harvey seized Lance by the throat and ejected him. The island thereafter was known by the name of "Choke Island."

Mr. Lance continued to operate this mine for several years when he was succeeded by a firm or company styled the New England Coal Co., whose manager was a man named Brown, from Boston, and who kept a bachelor's hall while here, in the old Samuel Ransom homestead.

This mine property later came into the possession of the Susquehanna Coal Co., and the coal therefrom being removed through other openings, the Grand Tunnel was abandoned. The Jamison Harvey mine, next adjoining the Grand Tunnel property, was operated in the same manner by Mr. Harvey for a number of years, when it also passed into the possession of the Susquehanna Coal Co.

The Nottingham shaft, owned mostly by the Reynolds heirs and members of the Nottingham Coal Co., was sunk, and the large breaker built during the middle sixties, under the management of Mr. Bryce R. Blair, who was formerly connected with the L. & B. R. R. This mine was first operated by Messrs. Thomas Broderick and Thomas D. Conyngham of Wilkes-Barre. They struggled along for several years until they were compelled, by reason of the troublesome and petty annoyances caused them by their employes, to sell out their interests to the L. & W. B. Coal Co. Strange as it may appear, those obstructive tactics on the part of the employes who were receiving generous wages, were engi-

neered largely, if not entirely, by men "to the manor born," whose former lives had been one of constant struggle with the hardships, privations and environments of dire poverty, but had, under the vicious teachings and influence of demagogues and dangerous labor agitators, become imbued with the idea that the servant should be master and rule with autocratic power. Almost every day at that mine a strike would be inaugurated, based on some trivial and ridiculous cause, and when that was lacking, when the employes would assemble in the morning, it is a notorious fact that often a stone, wet on both sides, would be tossed up to decide whether or not they should resume work for the day, the wet side winning. Mr. Broderick, the manager, a very honorable and fair-dealing man, would almost invariably grant every concession demanded, only to learn the next day that some new grievance would arise, and it became proverbial for him to inquire each morning, before arriving at the mine, "what new grievance is there to settle to-day."

Similarly, Mr. Broderick's unfortunate and disastrous experience has been that of many other individual operators, until finally the management of the coal industry has generally passed into the control of powerful corporations able to combat all difficulties, and yet, some of those who were responsible for the change wonder why these soulless corporations are so stern and heartless in their control.

The Wadhams coal mine up Wadhams Creek was operated during the 50's by E. C. Wadhams and afterwards came into the possession of the L. & W. B. Coal Co., and until recent years was operated through other channels by the Parrish Coal Co., of which Mr. Charles Parrish was the founder and first president. The Dodson mine, so called from the men who sank the shaft located

on Elm Hill, was owned mostly by John J. Shonk. It has been in operation under different managements for a number of years and is now in the control of Mr. J. C. Haddock under the title of the Plymouth Coal Co. The Gaylord mine has been under several different managements. During the 60's a Mr. Langdon of Elmira—the father-in-law of Mark Twain—was in control, I think, under the name of the Northern Coal and Iron Co.

The preceding reference to Mr. Jamison Harvey, whose residence was located up on the hill just beyond the Grand Tunnel, recalls an incident of historic interest which occurred there not a very great while before the time of the Choke Island incident just related, and will be of interest in this connection. It concerns the capture there by a U. S. Marshal of a colored man in his employment who was claimed as being a fugitive slave. That act was committed under the authority of an act of Congress which was passed in 1850 and known as the Fugitive Slave Law, one of the most infamous laws that was ever enacted. The law provided for the surrender to any claimant thereof, of any person they might choose to declare was a runaway slave, and all that was necessary to do under that law to prove ownership of the person so claimed was to make an affidavit before any commissioner appointed to take depositions, that the person so claimed was a slave who had escaped from his master, and upon the proper certificate from that official, without any further ceremony the accused persons were hurried off into slavery. Such persons being property, they were not permitted to testify, nor were they granted a hearing before a judge or jury. One of the obnoxious features of the law which was really in the nature of a bribe to the commissioners, was his fee of $10 in case he directed a sur-

render of the person of the accused, otherwise it was only half that amount.

In this case Mr. Harvey was, I believe, subjected to a fine for the efforts he exerted to save his man; whereas, under the benign provisions of the law he was in duty bound to aid in securing his arrest.

Another similar incident occurred at about the same time at the old Phoenix Hotel in Wilkes-Barre, which was located on the site of the present L. & W. B. Coal Company's office building on River Street. A mulatto waiter there was chased into the river by some slave hunters and fired upon with revolvers and badly wounded. He made his escape, however, and was later found hidden in the weeds along the shore and cared for. His would-be captors having announced that "a dead nigger" would be of no use to them. The brutal enforcement of that iniquitous law was one of the primary causes which led up to the war of the rebellion, and yet there are people who place the responsibility for that war upon the Abolitionists.

Soon after the time of these occurrences there came from the press that historic novel of Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It created a most profound sensation at the time and the story is familiar to nearly everybody throughout the North to-day. I have in my possession a copy of one of the first of the many thousand editions of that famous novel, which I loved to hear my grandfather read as we all sat around his fireside on winter evenings.

Chapter IX.

Reverie—Wild Pigeons—Swimming—Rafting—A Disappointing Experience—Traveling Inconveniences—Flood of 1852 and the Resulting Hardships—Flood of 1865—Incidents of the Flood—Early Military Organizations—The Shawnee Rangers—General Trainings—Martial Music—Black Jack—Later Military Companies—Top Heaviness of the Military Establishment.

THE sensations of a drowning person, it is said by those who have been resuscitated after having nearly undergone that fate, are that the events and scenes of their whole lives—like a panorama—are flashed before their mind's eye in a moment, and the forgotten memories and most trifling incidents of the past are vividly brought into view.

It is a sensation something like that which I experience as I attempt to locate the almost obliterated landmarks of near a century ago; as the obscure evidence of their former existence brings them into view, old scenes and long-forgotten incidents connected therewith are vividly recalled and flash through the mind with lightning rapidity, and in the effort to describe them I am at a loss how or where to begin. For instance, here stands an old tree that appears about the same as I remember it when a boy. It must be over a hundred years old; what precious memories it recalls.

> "Kind friends are gone but the old tree stands,
> Unharmed by the warring blasts."

Over there by the roadside stands the relics of another old veteran of the forest, from whose decaying branches I fired at a red squirrel with an old horse pistol from which part of the stock blew off with the explosion, and I have wondered whether the squirrel or I was the worse scared. On yonder ledge I have sat, and watched

with admiration—where now are only to be seen unsightly piles of culm—the shadows of the clouds as they passed over the waving fields of grain and meadow on the Shawnee Flats, presenting a scene of beauty far surpassing the painter's art, and, in imagination, I can see the crows as they came, flying singly, or in pairs or flocks to their far away mountain homes. In yonder field, now covered with dwelling houses, is where we used to coast on the crusted snow on moonlight nights, on sleds made up of barrel staves which flew almost with the speed of the wind. On the brow of yonder hill I have stood with gun in hand, patiently waiting and hoping for a chance to shoot at the wild pigeons as they passed over, in flocks so dense as almost to obscure the light of the sun, but so high up that a Krag Jorgenson rifle could be scarcely able to reach them; and there, way down in that field yonder near the river, where I was sent to work, some idle boys would pass and holding up two fingers—an inviting sign to go swimming—was sufficient inducement to while the happy hours away in the comfortable waters at the mouth of Wadham's Creek, while my indulgent father—until, in the interest of my health Fuller Reynolds advised him otherwise—was fondly indulging the ridiculous belief that I was industriously hoeing corn.

Thus do "fond memories bring the light of other days around me," and the happy days of boyhood are again lived over; but, like a tale that is told, naught remains but memories which will doubtless be of little interest here, and as garrulousness is said to be a characteristic of old people, that must be my excuse for the telling, if one is needed.

In the days of early spring for many years it was a common sight to see the river filled with rafts of lumber, and arks loaded with potatoes, or other articles of pro-

duce coming from the headwaters of the river in New York State, pass by on the annual spring freshet. For days at a time these would pass almost continuously by hundreds. They would go through the chute by the side of the Nanticoke Dam and proceed on down to various points along the river from whence their crews—as often did canal boatmen—would return on foot to their homes.

I had long had a very ardent desire to have a ride on one of those lumber rafts, with their cosy looking little cabins in the centre, so one day I procured a skiff, and with a great deal of laborious effort rowed up stream about a mile, when I struck out to intercept one in the middle of the river, fondly expecting to enjoy a long and very pleasant ride, but alas! my painful exertions had strangely enough caused me to overlook the wonderful rapidity of the current, and as soon as I reached the coveted goal I looked around and to my amazement saw that I was far below my starting point. Without delay I pulled for shore and reached home with my hands badly blistered and a sadder and much wiser boy, and with the desire for rafting entirely gone.

There being no railroad conveniences, or other convenient and expeditious means of travel in those days, pedestrian methods were quite commonly resorted to, and I have myself seen men with carpet bag in hand traveling to Bloomsburg and Danville in the prosecution of their business pursuits, and—I am almost afraid to tell it—sixty miles a day was not considered an extraordinary or unusual distance for a day's journey on foot.

These annual freshets, while they were usually anticipated or expected, were often the cause of considerable trouble and expense in the destruction of fences, and in

the removal of driftwood and other debris after the waters had subsided.

In the year 1852 I think it was, there came a rather unusual and unexpected flood in July, which caused much loss and damage and subsequent distress. Considerable of the grain on the flats had been cut and stood in shocks in the fields. The farmers worked at night with their teams in efforts to save their crops, but the river rose so rapidly that very little in that direction could be accomplished, and what was saved was covered with mud and for a year afterwards gritty wheat flour was much in evidence, the only alternative being bread made from rye which was mostly grown on the uplands, or Johnny cakes, conditions, which to the fastidious palates of to-day would doubtless seem more appalling than the horrors of the present European war. The poor cattle and horses were probably the worst sufferers, for neither hay or grain could be handled without raising a smothering cloud of dust; but in the case of both man and beast, it was simply a question of eat or starve.

The most appalling flood, however, occurred on St. Patrick's Day, March 17th and 18th, 1865. The weather was clear and pleasant and the ice had all passed out of the river, and people were congratulating themselves that all danger from floods had passed. However, there had sprung up a warm south wind which melted the heavy snows on the mountains and along the headwater sheds of the river and brought the waters down with a rush. On the 17th there was a township election being held in the upper schoolroom of the Academy and in the afternoon the tardy voters from the upper end were obliged to make use of the fence between Mr. Gaylord's residence and the Wadhams' residence in order to reach the polling place. Late in the afternoon I rowed a boat up

to the door of the schoolroom and took the election board to dry land. The water rose to cover the tops of the counters in Wadhams' store. Manny Wharram had hastily built some boats for service on the occasion, and on the 18th I rowed one of these into the front door entrance of Mr. Wadhams' residence and took on board his family, they stepping into the boat from the second or third step from the bottom of the hall stairway. The wind was blowing almost a gale and the boat was unwieldy. We sailed over the top of the garden fence. I lost my cap in the perilous voyage but managed to land the cargo safely at the foot of the hill somewhere near the upper end of Gaylord Avenue. Later I removed the family of Rev. J. G. Eckman from the old Methodist parsonage to a place of safety. In passing one of their children to me in the boat, before I could get a secure hold the boat gave a lurch and the kid dropped into the water. That same kid is now, I believe, or was, the pastor of one of the largest churches in New York City. If perchance he should ever read these lines I wonder if he can remember the incident of his immersion.

While there was much damage and suffering caused by this flood to many of the people of Plymouth, yet there were also many comical and laughable incidents connected with it. Nearly everybody appeared to take the situation philosophically and in good nature, and in fact, many seemed rather to enjoy the unusual novelty and excitement incident thereto. In the upper end of town it seemed as though nearly all of the outhouses of the neighborhood had a penchant for eddying in or near the main street, and that ever jovial and irrepressible Tom Dodson, having marooned a keg of liquor, he established a free bar in one of them, and it was said that nearly everybody in the neighborhood got drunk.

The earliest, and in fact the only remembrance I have of any military organizations in Plymouth, and that is very indistinct, is that of the "Shawnee Greens," although there was some kind of a military system in vogue in the State in early days whereby the military subjects were required to arm and equip themselves. I remember of hearing my father speak of being required, in obedience to orders of the Brigade Inspector, to report somewhere for muster, when the men would appear armed with sticks or cornstalks for guns. Where or when these inspections were held I am not aware, nor do I recollect having ever seen any military drills or parades in Plymouth.

The "Shawnee Greens," so named from the color of the gorgeous uniforms they wore, was organized by Francis J. Smith probably about the year 1842 or 1843. The officers were Francis J. Smith, captain, and Fuller Reynolds and Draper Smith, lieutenants. Their green uniforms consisted of frock-tailed coats with a profusion of round brass bell buttons, tasseled epaulettes and helmets with gorgeous plumes which might have excited the envy of Henry of Navarre.

I don't think this formidable arm of national defense was very large, or that it survived very long, for I remember when about seven or eight years of age, while living in Kingston, where Captain Smith also at that time lived in the old stone house on the corner, that we boys got access to a room where the uniforms were stored, and helped ourselves to brass buttons and gilt trimmings.

I have often heard of general training days which I think occurred in the spring months, and an important feature of which was ginger cakes and cider. I think these military displays generally took place either at Kingston or Wilkes-Barre. The only ones which I can

recall were at Kingston when uniformed troops from Wilkes-Barre paraded and I think they wore white trousers which were held down with leather straps under the boots. These all made an appearance which to the juvenile mind particularly was very formidable and awe-inspiring.

On these, as on all similar occasions, perhaps the most attractive feature of the display was the music. For martial music I don't believe there ever was or probably can be, when properly executed, anything more inspiring or calculated to arouse the highest pitch of patriotic ardor, than the fife and drums. In this particular on all military or civic occasions, "Shawnee against the world," Plymouth was without a peer. There was Henderson Egbertson, with his tenor drum; his brother Jim, familiarly known as "Bucksy," with the bass drum, and Black Jack, with the fife, and whenever they paraded, as they sometimes did through the main street of an evening, they always attracted an audience.

Black Jack was one of the conspicuous characters of Plymouth. It was said of him that he could play the fife on a march from Plymouth to Wilkes-Barre without cessation. He used to work for my grandfather and on one occasion I had it all planned to accompany him on a sled load of grain to Wilkes-Barre. At the opportune moment, however, my grandmother despatched me on some brief errand and when I got back Jack was gone. I felt very much aggrieved over the shabby trick that had been played upon me, but it was doubtless fortunate, for when Jack came home his condition was not such as would have made his company very desirable. One morning early he came to our house and told my mother that he was going away, and gave her his fife for me to

keep until his return, and I have poor Jack's fife in my possession yet.

All of the colored people in Plymouth that I ever knew had the prefix "black" attached to their given names. Black John and Black Anthony I have already referred to, and there was a servant of Mrs. Chauncey Reynolds who was known as Black Ann. I never heard mentioned any surnames of these persons if they had any.

Concerning later military organizations here, about the time of the close of the war, or shortly after the military spirit, particularly among the younger generation began to manifest itself and many military organizations sprang up throughout the State. Plymouth at one time boasted of three infantry companies captained respectively by A. F. Levi, Wm. W. Woodword and Martin Carey. The militia laws of the State, however, being so crude and unsatisfactory, and no adequate or material financial support being provided, these organizations did not long survive. One, and perhaps the most formidable feature of the military arm of the State government at that time was the multitudinous array of officers connected with it. At one time it is said that there were in command of some three hundred military companies in the State, no less than twenty-one major generals, with perhaps near that number of brigadier generals, each with a large retinue of colonels and majors as staff officers, which in the aggregate nearly equalled the number of privates.

About 1879 the military establishment was thoroughly reorganized, resulting in its present superior state of efficiency.

Chapter X.

Early Methods of Traveling—Weaver's Stage Line—Steamboats —The Little Jim—Transferring Canal Boats—Shows and Circuses—Burial Grounds and Cemeteries—Early Medical Methods—Doctors—Bogus Diplomas.

MENTION has heretofore been made of the early methods or means of traveling from place to place. There being no public means of traveling, the people as a rule having employment enough at home to engage their time and attention, unless called away on business or allured by some unusual attraction in Wilkes-Barre, generally remained at home, and those who were thus called away, if not possessed of horses and conveyances, took the only safe and independent course, of going on foot. The city of Scranton was then unborn and Pittston, with little or no inducements to offer, was nearly as far distant as is Philadelphia to-day, so that about the only easy accessible points of attraction were Kingston and the Borough of Wilkes-Barre. The route there was through the Narrows and over Ross Hill. Many of those with teams would tie their horses to the fence, or to the trees in the grove near the entrance to the bridge and walk across to save bridge toll which was an item of expense worthy of consideration in those days.

On the lower side of the road, near the entrance to the old covered bridge, in an old framehouse, a man named Gunton did quite a thriving business selling melons and oysters in season, the latter in small kegs of one or two quarts size. The first attempt towards establishing a means of public conveyance was sometime in the early 50's when Charley Weaver established a stage line from Plymouth to Wilkes-Barre. His two-horse coach would start from Lance's barn at the lower end of town and make two round trips daily. The fare for the

round trip was fifty cents. The patronage, however, was not sufficient to insure success and the project was soon abandoned.

After the L. & B. Railroad got in operation the fare to Kingston was fifteen cents, and across the flats to Wilkes-Barre, on the horse cars, ten cents. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made at different times to navigate the river from Tunkhannock to Wilkes-Barre, but only during high water stages could a boat get through. I think a Captain Converse was one of the pioneers in those attempts. When Hendrick B. Wright was in Congress he obtained an appropriation to dredge the channel at Fish Island near Wilkes-Barre, sufficient to permit a boat to pass through. The river from that point to Nanticoke being navigable at low water, and he with others formed a company and put on a stern-wheel steamboat bearing his name to ply between Wilkes-Barre and Nanticoke. The boat made four daily trips between the two points and proved to be much of a convenience to the traveling public. This enterprise proving so successful, Fremont Jenkins put on a small boat named the "Magnolia," and afterwards added the "Plymouth," both side-wheelers, and Theodore Renshaw put on the "Mayflower," and afterwards the larger "Lyman Truman," and Joel Walp had a stern-wheeler, the "Wilkes-Barre.."

The intense rivalry between these steamship lines in connection with the railroad soon made the business unprofitable; and with the gradual filling up of the river channel with culm and the low water, caused by the disuse of the Nanticoke dam, made navigation impossible.

The Hendrick B. Wright was wrecked by the ice, as was also the Wilkes-Barre; the Truman blew up and the Mayflower was taken over to Harvey's lake.

Aside from a small pleasure yacht, the "Wingohocking," brought here from Philadelphia by James Martin, the first regular steamboat service on the river here was a tug boat called the "Little Jim," rechristened the "William Patten," and brought here by that gentleman for the purpose of towing canal boats to and from his coal chutes to the canal entrance at Nanticoke. I believe that George P. Richards was the first engineer on that boat.

Before the advent of that tug, the custom had been for boats with their teams to cross the river by means of a rope ferry below Harvey's wharf, and then to tow them up the "Pool" to near the Outlet lock above Butzbach's, from which point they would be "poled" to and from their respective wharves.

Boats destined to points further up the canal, before approaching this Outlet lock would through their boat horns sound notice of their approach, in time for the "tender" to prepare the lock for their entrance into the canal. Occasionally some expert bugler would perform that duty and often on a calm summer evening their pleasing melodies could be distinctly heard in town.

Besides the annual elections, the events of most absorbing interest, particularly to the rising generation, was the periodical visits of Van Amburg's Menagerie, and Dan Rice's and Forepaugh's Circuses to Wilkes-Barre. The former was the only one of these exhibitions I was ever permitted to attend. The circuses, aside from the financial aspects of the case, were considered entirely unnecessary and of a demoralizing nature, and in consequence my only recourse was to view with wistful gaze the gorgeous pictures of the forty-horse chariots and the wonderful acrobatic feats as displayed on the side of a barn.

On all such occasions it was most aggravating to see

ACADEMY STREET FROM SHAWNEE AVENUE

the long processions of male and female, adult and juvenile pedestrians wending their way to Wilkes-Barre in the early morning, equipped with their day's provisions and prepared to spend the day in undisturbed enjoyment of these to me forbidden pleasures.

There was, however, one consoling feature which tended somewhat to mitigate the pangs of disappointment; "Milly" would always call us up before daylight in time to see the elephants and camels and ponies and wagons with their sleepy attendants pass by on their way to Berwick. I was about sixteen years of age before I ever attended a circus and then I ran away from school at Wyoming and walked over to Pittston at night to see it.

Passing now from the gay and frivolous, to the more serious and grave concerns, I have already described the private burying ground of the Hodge family in the French orchard. I have heard intimated that there was in very early days another graveyard somewhere in the vicinity of the flat road near the "swing gate," but of this I have no definite knowledge, nor is there any evidence of one having been there. The one on the corner of Shawnee Avenue and Reynolds Street, known as the Reynolds graveyard, was established in 1828. In the records in Luzerne County Courthouse is filed a lease from John Turner and Benjamin Reynolds, to Calvin Wadhams, Joseph Wright, Jamison Harvey, Noah Wadhams, Freeman Thomas, Samuel Wadhams, George S. Clark, Henry Gabriel, Joshua Pugh, and said Turner in common with the others, for land for 900 years, "for the purpose of a private burying ground." This lease is dated November 20, 1828, was acknowledged May 14, 1845, and recorded August 6, 1851, and on November 20, 1828, Benjamin Reynolds and John Turner acknowledges receipt from the lessees of $10, "in full in advance

for all rents for term of 900 years." Most all of the bodies have been removed from this burying ground to other places; but few remaining, of old residents, their graves uncared for and perhaps long ago forgotten, and the ground is overgrown with weeds and briars, and made a depository for tin cans and other rubbish by the unsympathetic occupants of the adjoining lots. There is another private burying ground on "Turkey Hill," known as the Davenport burying ground which has I believe—since the establishment of the Shawnee Cemetery further up the hill—been abandoned as a burying ground.

Until within recent years many interments of Plymouth residents were made in the cemeteries at Forty-Fort or Wilkes-Barre. The Hollenback Cemtery at Wilkes-Barre was opened in 1856 and my sister Cornelia was the second person to be buried there in June of that year.

Perhaps the earliest public burying ground in Plymouth is the old Shupp graveyard near the L. & B. junction. I have no knowledge of when or by whom this graveyard was established. It formerly comprised several acres of ground but all the larger part of this has been covered over by the D. & H. Co. with huge piles of refuse from their adjacent mines, and only a garden patch in size remains, in a very dilapidated state, but is still being used by the public, where interments are yet being made three and four deep.

Perhaps at no distant day the general public will become sufficiently enlightened to substitute the more humane and sanitary method of cremation for the repulsive and revolting one of sepulture; and why, from an economic point of view, should the dead be permitted to encumber the ground and be in the way of the living?

From graveyards to doctors, or vice versa, is a very

easy and seemingly logical transition of topics of discussion; while we all have faults, and are prone to mistakes, —the easiest of all human accomplishments,—unfortunately perhaps we can't always hide, or bury them in everlasting oblivion. In the early days when doctors were few and far between, and not easily accessible, the mothers, or some neighborly old grandmothers were the family physicians; and not until the patient got beyond their skill was the doctor summoned, when, after inspecting the tongue and examining the pulse, he would look wise, and if he didn't resort to blood letting would almost invariably prescribe the proverbial dose of Rhubarb, or Calomel and Castor Oil; all very excellent remedies, and well calculated to arouse a very decisive, if not enthusiastic hygienic interest; but the vilest prescription I think, and one on which I always drew the line, was sulphur mixed in molasses; that dose is the climax of nastiness. The prevalent diseases or ailments of today, were diagnosed under different names, for example, diphtheria was probably an aggravated sore throat, pneumonia, inflammation of the lungs, and appendicitis, either inflammation of the bowels or dry belly ache.

In nearly every house might be seen hanging from the rafters in the attic, or strung along the beams, a well arranged assortment of catnip, sweet fern, sage and various other "yarbs" possessing sedative, laxative and purgative, or other medicinal virtues, while a bag of roots of varied species was usually near at hand, or in case of emergency some old Nimrod of Knowledge and experience would be despatched to the woods or fields in search of squaw roots, golden-thread, burdock or other roots necessary to the requirements of the domestic pharmacy, and the compounding or manufacture of all which into teas, salves or poultices was by no means an occult art.

I have often heard mention made of a Doctor Montross of early days, who lived somewhere back of the mountain who was regarded somewhat as a medical prodigy, but my earliest recollection of the fraternity was a Doctor Boyd of Wilkes-Barre, who perhaps, at that period was more instrumental in increasing the census statistics of the town than any one other. Then there was a doctor John Smith also of Wilkes-Barre, an early practitioner here who always sat cross legged in his lumbering top buggy which was drawn by a horse with a maximum speed of about one mile in seventy-five minutes, but who always brought sunshine and hope in his visits. Doctor Ebenezer Chamberlin was one of, if not the oldest early resident physicians. He was a very genial and kind hearted man, known to almost everybody from his pointed and witty sayings, and characteristics. He lived here for many years and had a large practice. He also served as Justice of the Peace for a number of years. Doctor J. E. Bulkley and Doctor Brisbane both of Wilkes-Barre were frequent visitors. In later years there were as resident physicians Doctors Bixby, Rickard, M. G. Whitney, Wilson, and McKee,—father and son,—all of whom were respected physicians and each enjoying a large practice.

In the late 70's quite a commotion was stirred up amongst the medical fraternity throughout the State, by a report to the authorities from our Minister in Germany, the Hon. Andrew D. White, to the effect that a man named Buchanan in Philadelphia was engaged in the business of selling doctors' diplomas purporting to issue from an institution called the "Philadelphia University," which being confounded there with the University of Pennsylvania, an institution of learning, of world wide reputation, was heaping discredit upon that

institution. An investigation resulted and legal measures adopted which had the effect of unearthing many of those bogus certificates throughout the country, much to the chagrin and discomfiture of the possessors thereof.

Chapter XI.

Early Methods of Weighing—System of Barter—Reason for Peculiarity of Prices of Commodities—Currency Conditions—Spanish Coins—Fips and Shillings—Counterfeit Notes—Era of Shinplasters—Customs of Early Merchants—Means of Travel—Wholesale Merchants—Arrival of Goods—Pedlars and Their Wares.

IN early days most commodities sold by weight, were weighed on steelyards. For small articles or quantities these were weighed by holding the steelyard with the article to be weighed suspended thereto, with one hand, and with the other, adjusting the balance upon the extended steelyard arm which indicated the weight; hence, in the records of sales or purchases made, it is not unusual to find such seemingly, to us, odd quantities named as for example 6¾ pounds of coffee or 10¼ pounds of sugar. It used to be said of one very early merchant that in his dealings with the Indians, his hand weighed one pound and his foot two pounds.

Purchases were very commonly made by means of barter, or exchange of commodities,—ready money was in many cases, an almost unknown quantity. The farmers banking capital and facilities was his grain, hay, potatoes and other articles of produce, with occasionally some portions of a dressed hog, or a quarter or side of beef or veal, most of which articles were always very acceptable in payment to the doctor, the shoemaker or the blacksmith, while the housewife sold butter and eggs or

home knit woolen mittens and stocking, and then, as most every household had its own seamstress, the concomitant and convenient rag bag, with "paper rags" worth three cents a pound at any of the stores, was a small but valuable aid in the procuring of thread and other such necessary items.

Another one of the peculiar early customs unknown or unpracticed at the present time, although a popular one as late as the time of the war of the rebellion, was the making the prices to be charged for many articles, or commodities, 6¼ cents, or 12½ cents, a pound or a yard. The reason for such common use of the fraction in connection with the sale price of articles, was doubtless owing to the condition and value of the currency then in general circulation, which consisted almost entirely of Spanish silver coins and State bank notes; a standard of value being, generally, a "Spanish Milled Dollar."

Hon. John Sherman, former Secretary of the U. S. Treasury, in his memoirs says, that "in 1793 foreign coins were a legal tender for circulation in this country. Spanish coins found great favor—Spanish dollars though three grains heavier than ours, were readily exchanged in Mexico and the West Indies for our bright new coins. This led to an exchange of our dollars for the Spanish ones which were promptly received at our mint at a profit. This put upon the government the expense of making coins with no advantage. This was free coinage. In 1806 President Jefferson prohibited the coinage of silver dollars and when S. P. Chase became Secretary of the Treasury in 1861, there were probably not 1,000 silver dollars in the United States."

"By the Acts of Congress of 1834 and 1837, the ratio of coinage was made 16 to 1, with the result that gold coins were largely introduced and circulated, but as

16 ounces of silver was worth more than one ounce of gold, the silver coins disappeared except the depreciated foreign coins, then a legal tender."

Those Spanish coins were nearly all worn so thin and smooth through circulation as to be almost undecipherable in appearance, but if there remained resemblance of any of the original earmarks of coinage on them they would pass at full value without question. The smallest of those coins was counted as 6¼ cents in exchange, and the next size 12½ cents and they were called respectively six pence or "fipenny bits,"—for short "fips,"—and shillings, or "eleven penny bits." A bit being 12½ cents which term was probably of Southern origin where it was commonly made use of. Most all of the bank notes were counterfeited, and nearly every merchant had one of Thompson's Monthly Bank Note detectors, which gave a minute description of every known counterfeit bill, and which he would always consult upon presentation to him of any unfamiliar note.

At the commencement of the war, even this debased silver currency entirely disappeared and the merchants and business men were put to great straights, before the issue of fractional currency by the government, to make change for bank notes in their business dealings. This inconvenience they overcame however, by many of them issuing their own scrip, or "Shinplasters," in denominations of five cents and its multiple up to 50 cents; of course, the only basis of value to this scrip was the reputation of the party issuing it. Even brass and copper tokens of all manner of devices and purporting to represent cents were put in circulation which were really of not as much value as a button, but almost anything was accepted in change without a murmur. After the issue of "greenbacks" by the government, it was nothing unusual

when making change of fifty cents, to cut a one dollar note in half.

Every spring and fall, before canal navigation closed, it was the custom of the merchants of the town and valley, to go to Philadelphia to replenish their stocks of goods. Their route of travel would be by stage from Wilkes-Barre to Tamaqua; leaving the old Phoenix Hotel long before daylight, they would take breakfast at Drums on the mountain and arrive about noon at Tamaqua, and from there take the train to Philadelphia. In later years a packet boat would connect at Catawissa with the Reading railroad. They usually traveled together and would put up in the city at the Black Bear Hotel on Third Street, the White Swan on Arch Street, or the Merchants, on Fourth Street, the principal hotels, and would make their purchases of the same firms.

The names of those wholesale merchants are yet very familiar. There was James Kent Santee & Co., and Ludwig, Kneedler & Co., dry goods, and Eckel & Reigel, C. C. Sadler provisions, G. S. Gilbert drugs, Joel J. Bailey notions, James Shields & Co., hardware, Godfrey Keepler, a jolly Dutchman, whom I later knew very well, Frishmuth & Co., who sold the white papers of smoking tobacco with the Indian and his pipe for a label, and Mason, whose shoe polish bore the familiar label of a colored boy shining a boot which reflected an angry rooster.

Their purchases were loaded on canal boats at Peter Wright's Son's wharf, and their arrival at Plymouth a week or ten days perhaps later, was always an event of very general interest, more especially to the women of the neighborhood, most of whom usually had given some special commission to the storekeeper to execute. Supplementing as it were these Philadelphia excursions, the

merchants had frequent opportunities of replenishing their stocks of small wares, particularly of candies, notions, and medicines, from traveling peddlar wagons which habitually passed through town. The medicine men usually drove gaily caparisoned horses hitched to gaudy wagons and distributed almanacs and descriptive circulars advertising remedies warranted to cure all ailments, or selling the well known Ayers Cherry Pectoral, Hines Tar Syrup, Swaynes Ointment, Indian Vegetable Pills, or galvanic ointment.

The first introduction here of kerosene oil, was by one of those wagons, in the form of crude oil put up in small phials and labeled Petroleum or Rock Oil, a sure cure for rheumatism.

Chapter XII.

The Past and the Present, Comparisons—The "Appy Og"—Mythical Superior Traits of Honesty—Early Habits and Characteristics of People—Social Courtesies—Sociability Among Neighbors—Quilting Parties—Visiting—Apple Cuts and Candy Pulls—Deferences to Old People—Incidents—The 400 Society—Town Newspapers—Names of Business Men and Firms.

IN apparent contravention of the old proverb that the world grows weaker and wiser, in comparisons made between the present and the past, one often hears lamentations by old people like those made by the Jews in olden times, of the departed glory of the "good old days" of yore, when everybody was honest and happy.

There is not much doubt I think, that a greater and more genuine spirit of sociability prevailed among our forebears and predecessors, than exists in communities today. Evidence of this may still be seen in most every

isolated country village or community which is cut off from railroad and other civilizing modern conveniences and luxuries. A natural human instinct there draws the people together, "to scorn delights and live laborious days;" their sympathies and their interests are mutual; what concerns one, is of more or less interest and concern to all the others; whereas, in populous centres, surrounded by all the wonderful means of speedy travel and communication with the outside world, the people are imbued with the progressive and wholly selfish spirit of the age which is, "every fellow for himself;" people come and people go unnoticed, and they don't really know their next door neighbors, and it is very questionable whether the people of today with all their luxurious surroundings are, in fact, as really happy and contented, and enjoy life as did those of a century ago in their homely simplicity, when their wants and desires were governed wholly by their resources, and they retired to bed and peaceful slumber in the happy assurance that they were "cocks upon their own dung hills."

In this connection, these reflections remind me of the story told of a certain business man of foreign extraction, who eliminated the h's in his conversations; in returning to his home one night somewhat obfusticated, in passing a pen in which lay a sleeping hog, on viewing which he thus soliloquized: "Appy, og, appy og, no notes to settle tomorrow, nothing to worry about."

We often read, and hear, much laudation concerning the frugality, purity, and honesty of our early predecessors. My memory extends back nearly seventy years, and during many of those years I have associated with and been in close business contact with many kinds and conditions of the human species, and from my readings and personal experiences, I have arrived at the conclusion that

the whole human family are, and always have been, infected with the same kind of cussedness from the days of Abraham and Moses down to the present day. Mr. George B. Wendling, in his recent lecture delivered in Wilkes-Barre, was correct when he said, "One of our delusions is, that farmers are more honest than other people," and when I hear of one of those ancient, honest pioneers, selling his unsuspecting neighbor "rotten clover hay," and remember of buying from a "dear friend," a barrel of rotten apples with a "strictly handpicked" covering, or a crate of inferior berries nicely concealed under "choice" varieties, by a professional Christian, I am confirmed in my belief, in at least that portion of the holy scripture attributed to the prophet Micah, that, "they hunt every man his brother with a net," and the really "good man is perished out of the earth."

In corroboration of what has been said concerning the social habits and characteristics of the early inhabitants, little acts of courtesy among neighbors were of frequent occurrence, in marked contrast to present day methods. If a man had a building to erect, after the timbers were all framed and prepared, it was a common custom on a given day, for the neighbors to all turn out to the "raising;" and in the butchering season, it was customary to always remember the near neighbors with a dainty cut from the slaughtered animal.

Frequently the women of the neighborhood would assemble to participate in a quilting party, an event of social importance. Social calls were quite a common practice on the part of both men and women, and it was not unusual for the women folks, unannounced, to start out in the forenoon with their "knitten," and spend the day with a neighbor, when, after the usual interesting and edifying subject of their respective distressful sufferings

from "rheumatiz," disordered "stomicks" or sore feet, had been thoroughly discussed and diagnosed, probably the abstruse theological doctrines of foreordination, transubstantiation, or infant baptism would be next in order and consume a considerable part of the time.

In the long winter evenings, oftentimes when it would be necessary on a dark night, to grope the way along the fences by the aid of a perforated tin lantern of a one lightning bug power of reflection, to get out of the mud, very pleasant visits would be made between neighbors, when a basket full of luscious apples and a pitcher of cider or, perhaps a genuine, warm mince pie, would always be in evidence.

For the younger generation, in the fall of the year "apple cuts" were a popular recreation. After the apples had been peeled and cored, they were strung on long strings, and it was not unusual to see them thus hanging in graceful festoons to dry, from the floor beams in houses, and making elegant roosting places for flies.

For the juveniles, molasses "candy pulls," with the accompanying games of "hunt the button," "choose the one that you love best," and similar diversions were much enjoyed by the blushing lads and lassies.

A kind of reverent deference was paid to the elderly people, as manifested in the affectionate terms used in addressing, or referring to them. For example, there was Aunt Liva Davenport, Aunt Fanny Turner, and Aunt Phoebe Wadhams, kind hearted old ladies, respected by everybody; and among the men, Uncle Robert Davenport, of whom it used to be said, that in a discussion in reference to winter thaws, he asserted there was always a thaw in January for he had seen hundreds of them. And there was Uncle "Benny" Reynolds, and Uncle Ingersol Wadhams, a general favorite, and of whom it

was said, that, being annoyed by persons coming across the river to steal turnips from his patch on the flats, he concealed himself in the weeds with a shotgun loaded with beans, and when one of the depredators stooped over to pull turnips, he fired at his anatomy with the result that thereafter he was left in undisputed possession of his crop.

In discussions among the women folks, in speaking of each other, it seems to have been a custom among them—perhaps from a similar custom of prefixing the word black, to the given names of colored persons,—to couple the first name of the wife, with the first name of her husband; for example, Mrs. Jacob Gould's name was Hannah, for short called Hanner, as was also that of Mrs. John Davenport, Mrs. Robert Davenport's name was Phoebe, and Mrs. Thomas Pringle's name was Betsy. This select coterie, probably in fashionable New York City parlance might be called the 400 Society of Plymouth. These names were rhymed together, thus:

Hanner Jake and Hanner John,
Phoebe Bob and Betsy Tom.

Maybe, like Buttercups babies, I have got these genealogies mixed, but it don't affect the illustration.

Plymouth, as a newspaper town, does not for some cause, appear to have been a success. The first attempt in publishing a newspaper here was made by Asher Gaylord some time during the middle 50's. It was a small folio, I think called the Herald. It was printed on coarse paper that was manufactured at Berwick by Wm. L. Lance who was experimenting there in the manufacture of paper from wood pulp. This paper which was considered merely a joke, only made two issues.

The earliest newspaper to be established in Plymouth was "The Plymouth Star," published weekly by E. D.

Barthe. It was established some time during the 60's and grew into a large circulation which continued for a number of years. Ill health of the publisher and a falling off of patronage finally caused its demise.

In 1869 a weekly paper was published by N. B. Burtch, called the Plymouth Register, but it was not of long duration. That paper I think, had first been established as a temperance organ by a man named Gould. It was later continued under the name of "The Index," by French and Levi,—primarily as an advertising medium—and was still later, continued for several years as a weekly by Dr. H. D. Bixby and his brother, and was quite a lively little sheet.

In 1891, the Plymouth Tribune was published a short time by W. H. Capwell, who was succeeded for a few years, by J. S. Sanders—or possibly Sanders was succeeded by Capwell. However, in 1896, J. W. Louis issued it for a short time as a daily, under the auspices of the Plymouth Board of Trade. In the issue of The Plymouth Star of Nov. 1, 1871, appears the advertisements of the following named business men and firms in Plymouth which will be of interest; they were: Harvey Bros. & Kern, and D. E. Frantz, planing mill and lumber; C. A. Kuschke, merchant tailor; C. H. Wilson, H. D. Bixby, G. W. McKee, A. G. Rickard, physicians and surgeons; Prof. H. Stadler, music teacher; E. Hair (successor to Samuel Snyder), and Barber and Jenkins, hardware; Dr. F. L. DeGour, dentist; Thos. Nesbitt, attorney; D. K. Spry, S. W. Frantz, drugs; E. C. Wadhams, Anthony Duffy, Wm. Davis & Co., John Albrighton & Co., J. Albrighton, Peter Shupp, dry goods and groceries; S. Weil, Freeman & Lees, Priester Schloss & Co., clothiers; J. Y. Wren, machinist and foundry; H. Hudson, David B. Williams, painters and decorators; E. W. Beck-

with, photographer; Thos. Dodson, carpenter; John Lees, James Eley, saloons and restaurants; Geo. P. Richards, liquors; M. M. Weir & Son, Frantz House, hotel; Frank Chelius, tobacco and cigars; N. Vanloon, Wm. Brown, John Hummel, Miner Nogle, livery stables; Dooley & Nealon, J. M. Williams, Joseph Switzer, cabinetmakers and undertakers; Tuttle, Edgar and Harrower, building materials and flour and feed; Brown & Mangan, Marx Weil, Harris & Morgan, Lewis Gorham, butchers; T. G. Jenkins, marble dealer; French & Levi, real estate and insurance; A. F. Levi, books; Carter & Co., fruits and vegetables; O. P. Gould, flour and feed; M. N. Madden, confectionery and canned goods; L. Boughtin, blacksmith and wheelwright, J. M. Connor, harness.

Chapter XIII.

The War of the Rebellion—Captain Gaylord—Copperheads—Fishing Creek Confederacy—Skulkers—Funeral of First Victim—Rev. Thomas P. Hunt—An Incident—Bounty Bonds—Railroad Riots of 1877—Acts of Lawlessness—Arrival of Troops—The Molly Maguires—Killing of Dunleavy.

ON April 12, 1861, with the firing on Fort Sumpter at Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, began the War of the Rebellion which was destined for five long dreary years, to spread death, destruction and misery over all the land. In that war, Plymouth furnished her full quota of men in support of the Union, some of whom are now sleeping in unmarked graves or among the "unknown" in the South; among that number being Captain Asher Gaylord, of whom mention has been already made.

In this connection, a short time prior to his last battle, Capt. Gaylord who was at home recuperating from

wounds he had received, paid me three dollars for a sword I had, and which he doubtless carried at the time of his death.

While Plymouth had many loyal sons during that war, she also, like many other communities, had within her boundaries a few "Copperheads;" so named from the venomous characteristics of that reptile which, lying concealed in the grass was ever ready at an opportune moment to inject its deadly venom. A colony of those copperheads near the close of the war, formed an encampment back of Bloomsburg in Columbia County, known as the Fishing Creek Confederacy, and were organized and armed, for the purpose of resisting the draft. It became necessary for the government to send U. S. troops there to disperse them.

During that period, some few—now-would-be patriots,—found the climate of Canada, or of distant states, more congenial to their health, and a few in Plymouth were arrested for acts of disloyalty.

Among the first victims from Plymouth of that war, was George Chamberlin, a son of the old doctor, who died in camp and his body was brought home for burial. The funeral was held on Sunday afternoon in the Methodist Church which was crowded to overflowing. Rev. Thos. P. Hunt, a Presbyterian minister from Wyoming, who was chaplain of the same regiment officiated at the services. Rev. Hunt was a small hunchback man who, by force of character had earned a wide reputation. His eye was penetrating, and his tongue, which he was utterly fearless in using, was sharper than a two-edged sword.

On this particular occasion, his discourse was more patriotic than theologic and it gave so great offense to one old gentleman present, that he arose in his seat and protested against what he called a prostitution of the

pulpit. As he started down the aisle to leave the church, the old doctor and chief mourner, who was intensely loyal, shouted out, "Give the old rebel hell." The services were concluded without further incident.

Near the close of the war, when conscription became necessary to fill up the depleted ranks of the armies, in order to fill the quota of Plymouth, the School Board issued bounty bonds in amounts aggregating upwards of $15,000 to supply substitutes for those unable or unwilling to go.

In July, 1877, almost immediately succeeding the peaceful enjoyments incident to the centennial celebration of our national independence, the country was startled at the outbreak of very serious rioting by the railroad employes in Pittsburg. These outbreaks of lawlessness, like an epidemic of contagious disease, rapidly spread over near the entire State. Railroad traffic was for a time interrupted, employes being assaulted and engines and cars demolished. Local authorities were utterly unable to cope with the situation, and the entire national guard of the State was called into service. The miners in the anthracite regions of Schuylkill and Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties were at the time on strike and soon became infected. A demon like spirit seemed to pervade the masses. In Scranton, Mayor McKune had been violently assaulted, and a posse of the leading citizens had fired upon and killed several of the rioters. A passenger train on the L. & B. R. R., arriving at Plymouth from Northumberland in the evening was stoned and the train obliged to remain on the siding at the depot. I was Burgess at the time and a committee of representative citizens reported to me, their fears of contemplated incendiarism against certain of the properties located here and connected with mining industries, and requested

me to officially invoke protection from the State. I telegraphed the State authorities and soon thereafter a regiment of soldiers was in possession of the town. Great was the indignation expressed at the arrival of troops, and—as also occurred in more recent years—many anxious inquiries were made regarding the responsibility for the presence here of troops. The answer may perhaps be found in the Adjutant General's report for that year.

Governor Hartranft, who had hastened home from a western journey at the commencement of the troubles, had by this time assumed control of the situation, and by a singular conincidence, Brigadier General E. W. Matthews, a former school teacher in Plymouth, was in charge of the troops which invaded the town. In front of the engine of the train which carried the troops was placed a gun, and at Nanticoke several companies were disembarked, and as skirmishers, during the night, proceeded up the road, taking into custody every man caught out of doors. Near a hundred of these night prowlers were thus captured, quite a number in Plymouth, some of whom were carried to Scranton, there to give an account of their actions.

The troops remained stationed here, and in the locality for several weeks, the staff officers using the stalled railroad cars for their headquarters.

During this period, occurred the trials and executions of the notorious Molly Maguires, an organized band of assassins which, for a number of years had terrorized all the counties in the anthracite coal region. It was a secret organization whose members were bound together by oaths and having signs and passwords, among whom assassination of objectionable persons was but a mere pastime.

So powerful had this dangerous organization become, that it required several years of patient effort on the part of skilled detectives, under the auspices of Franklin B. Gowen, president of the Reading Railroad Company, to unearth and disband them. Many were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, and near a dozen of them were executed in the several counties. Some of the members of this nefarious gang were located in Plymouth, and I still have in my possession as relics, quite a choice collection of murderous lead and brass knuckles, and leaded billies which were captured by the policemen of the town during those troublous times. One of their number named Dunleavy, was mysteriously shot one evening in a saloon on East Main Street, which incident had the effect of putting a quietus on the band in Plymouth.

Chapter XIV.

The Avondale Disaster—Typhoid Fever Epidemic—The Changes in Population—A Filial Tribute—Conclusion.

PLYMOUTH among other means, has gained a wide notoriety throughout the country by reason of her misfortunes and calamities. One of these occurred about 10 o'clock on Monday morning, September 6, 1869, when a fire broke out at the Avondale Shaft which was known also as the Steuben Coal Co., which, in its terrible results gave a shock to the entire country, and spread a pall of grief over the whole valley.

The fire originated from a ventilating furnace at the foot of the shaft and was thence communicated to the breaker located directly over it, causing the death by asphyxiation of 110 persons in the mine and leaving destitute 72 widows and 153 orphaned children. Appeals to

the country at large were made for relief of the destitute, which was generously responded to, to the amount of $155,825.10.

Again, on the 10th of April 1885, there suddenly broke out one of the most serious epidemics of typhoid fever on record. Its origin was traced to a typhoid fever patient living in a house which was located near the source of the town's water supply. The accumulated deadly germs emanating from this patient which had been cast upon the snow and frozen ground during the preceding month, were thence washed by the rains and melting snow into the stream which supplied the town with water. So rapid and virulent was the disease, that fifty cases a day developed, and some 1200 persons were stricken, among whom occurred over 100 deaths. The doctors of the town were unable to cope with it, and the suffering throughout the town was intense. Four and five cases were to be found in a single house and in some instances as many as three in a single room. The good people of Philadelphia came to the rescue and sent here a corps of trained medical attendants besides rendering substantial financial assistance. The High School building on Shawnee Avenue was converted into a hospital, and many of the patients were removed there.

Among the many wonderful changes which have taken place in Plymouth within the lifetime of its oldest residents, none are perhaps so marked as in that of its inhabitants. From a mere hamlet, composed mostly of Connecticut Settlers or their descendants, every one of whom was well known to each other, it has grown to a heterogeneous population of some 17,000—the dimensions of a third class city. The changes in the character, manners and habits of the population have occurred at regular intervals, and bear a striking resem-

blance to the migrations which have characterized the world's history, and verifies the truth of the saying, that "westward the star of empire takes its way."

At the commencement of the extensive developments of the coal industry in the town and valley, the population was composed largely of Irish and Germans, drawn hither by those operations. These in a few years gave place to the English and Welsh, and they in turn have been largely displaced by the Slavonic and other peoples of eastern and southern parts of Europe who, in like manner may eventually give place to the Chinese and Japanese, who knows.

Frequent mention of my father has been made throughout the preceding pages, and necessarily it could not well be otherwise, for the name of Samuel French was connected, or associated with, nearly every industrial and business enterprise in the town for many years, hence, that reference was not the result of studied effort to exalt family pride and needs no apology.

In closing these reminiscences however, a filial affection for a kind and affectionate parent, as well as one of the leading and respected citizens of the town, prompts me to add a word to his revered memory. He was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, July 6th, 1803, about a month after the death of his father, who, by a singular coincidence, was born on the death bed of his mother. At an early age he came to Plymouth, where he lived, and died July 25th, 1866, a little past the age of 63 years. At an early period he engaged in the business of mining and shipping coal, later, in connection with mining, farming and merchandising. His mining operations he conducted until within a few years of his decease. He was always industrious—never idle —and by his industry and frugality he accumulated suffi-

cient means to live more than comfortably. He was kind, indulgent and charitable, attended strictly to his own business and enjoyed the esteem and respect of everyone.

In an obituary notice of him, published at the time of his death, it was said of him, that "he lived and died an honest man," and what better eulogy, or more noble heritage can be bequeathed.

Now in conclusion, in penning these reminiscences, it has been my aim to present a pen picture of the town as I remembered it in boyhood days. In locating old landmarks, and gathering data, I have consulted old residents, records, and documents, and the results as I have recorded them, I believe to be very generally authentic.

The scenes and incidents related, are most entirely those of my own personal knowledge of the occurrences, or, as I have heard them related by old people.

This recital of former scenes and incidents relating to my native town, in which my endeavor has been to "Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice," I have little doubt will revive in the minds of older people, long forgotten memories of the past, and perhaps, in a historical sense, may not be entirely uninteresting to the younger generation; and, if perhance their perusal affords as much pleasure to the reader, as the recital has afforded pleasure and recreation to the writer, he will be in a measure repaid for his time and labor.

"The evil that men do lives after them;
The good, is oft interred with their bones."

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